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LD051423 [Editorial Report]

Lebanon

More Kidnappings; Hostage Claims—Two UNRWA employees, a Swede and a Norwegian, were kidnapped by unidentified gunmen south of Sidon 5 February, the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon announced. The kidnappers intercepted the car carrying the two men at the Sayniq Bridge and took them to an unknown destination.

The same day, Voice of Lebanon cited information received from "highly placed sources" as saying that Anglican Church envoy Terry Waite has "met his doom" at the hands of his kidnappers, after they had obtained the information they wanted from him. The station later reported that West German hostage Ralph Schray "will not be freed soon," despite Syrian efforts on his behalf. According to the station, Schray has been moved to Beirut's southern suburbs in a diplomatic car "flying the Iranian flag."

Hubayqah Accusation—The Elie Hubayqah Group has accused the Armenian Secret Army of involvement in the death of the French agent assassinated 2 February as well as the killings of at least two other Frenchmen in Beirut, Voice of Lebanon reported. While admitting that the Hubayqah Group had remained in contact with the slain man until 1985, the group "strongly condemned" the killing and affirmed that it has "no connection" with this incident.

Israel

'Terrorist' Clash—Two IDF soldiers were killed in a clash with a 'terrorist squad' attempting to infiltrate Israeli territory in Galilee, according to an announcement broadcast by IDF radio. One 'terrorist' was killed and one captured in the incident, the announcement stated, adding that the squad's mission was to seize civilian hostages. The radio also cited Chief of Staff General Dan Shomron as maintaining that there is a "link" between incidents in the occupied territories in recent weeks and efforts by "Palestinian terrorists" to infiltrate Israel.

Political Developments—Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir was "extremely encouraged" by the "complete calm and security prevailing" in the Gaza Strip following his visit there, Jerusalem radio reported. In an interview carried by Jerusalem television on the visit, the prime minister stated that there is "no justification" for the "inhuman" conditions that exist in the Gaza refugee camps, adding that the blame for this "lies mainly with the Arab world," which is "interested" in perpetuating these conditions.

Meanwhile, differences have emerged between the prime minister's office and the Foreign Ministry over what U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering said concerning the latest Jordanian position in separate meetings with Shamir and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, according to a Jerusalem radio report. Shamir's aides say King Husayn is willing to postpone an "international opening" until December, when negotiations on a permanent settlement begin, while Peres' aides insist the King wants an "international opening" in April or May, when the autonomy talks begin.

On the West Bank, only minor disturbances were reported in Balatah refugee camp and in Halhul, Jerusalem radio reported, while noting that one Israeli settler was "badly wounded" in a "mob" attack near Al-Malik village. IDF radio reported that an IDF officer who opened fire 3 February "contrary to regulations" has been suspended.

Iran-GCC Meeting

In a political roundtable discussion carried by Tehran television, Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati confirmed reports that a foreign ministerial conference of the GCC states and Iran will be convened to discuss security in the Gulf region. The deputy foreign ministers of the seven countries will "soon" meet in the UAE to prepare the agenda for the conference, Besharati said.

Iran-Iraq War

Iranian gunboats attacked a Panamanian tanker off the UAE coast 5 February, Voice of the Masses radio reported. Tehran radio reported the attack was carried out by "speedboats."

Maghreb Affairs

Tunisian-Libyan Talks—Tunisian President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali received visiting Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, Tunis radio reported. In arrival remarks reported by JANA, Al-Qadhdhafi indicated that the talks would focus on ways to promote Arab unity in order to "confront hostile challenges" and deal with underdevelopment.

Moroccan Denial—The Moroccan Government "categorically denied" a report citing the Moroccan ambassador to the United States as suggesting that U.S. F-16 aircraft, which are due to be withdrawn from Spain, be transferred to Morocco, MAP reported. The agency added that the report "does not accord" with Morocco's political line.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab People's Congress Issues Resolution

LD042337 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 2200 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] At the Oares Hotel in Algiers this evening, the proceedings of the first session of the Arab People's Congress culminated in an agreement on a number of documents which reflect the responsible pan-Arab path of the Arab People's Congress. The final communique, which has been released, states in particular:

In the Arab arena, the mass uprising of the Palestinian people and its support were the subjects that drew the interest and concerns of the listeners. They issued a special communique supporting this uprising, which occupied a significant place in the communique of the final session.

This document stated that the Palestinian Arab land has witnessed a general mass uprising since the beginning of September 1987, in which all people, from all walks of life, took part. It extended to all cities and towns of Palestine, thus defying all police measures and campaigns of barbaric repression, terrorism, and torture, emphasizing the determination of the Palestinian Arab masses to evacuate the Zionist occupation and achieve the legitimate national demands of the Palestinian people; namely, to liberate their country, to achieve self-determination, and to establish an independent state in Palestine under the leadership of the PLO, their sole legitimate representative.

The communique added that the mass uprising, heroic struggles, and military operations carried out by Palestinian fighters complement the heroic military operations being carried out by the heroes of the Lebanese national resistance.

Regarding the Iraq-Iran war, the Permanent Secretariat of the Arab People's Congress notes that at a time when Arab masses and their progressive forces are looking to the valiant uprising of the Palestinian Arab people, and see in it a sign for a new phase of Arab struggle, the continuation of the Iraq-Iran war and the failure to find a solution to it harm the interests of the two brotherly Iranian and Iraqi peoples, smother these interests, and damage mutual concerns.

The communique added that the Permanent Secretariat of the Arab People's Congress, which believes that the central cause of the Arab Secretariat is the liberation of Palestine, calls for putting an end to this destructive war and for a response to international appeals.

As for the Maghreb, the Permanent Secretariat supports the efforts of the countries of this part of the Arab world to consolidate and to bring unionist views closer with the aim of establishing the greater Maghreb as a step toward total Arab unity.

The Secretariat sees that among the notable hurdles facing this march is the problem of the Western Sahara. Therefore, the Permanent Secretariat stresses the need for solving this problem through the resolutions of the United Nations, the OAU, and nonaligned countries, based on the implementation of the right to self-determination of the Saharan people and putting these resolutions into practice.

On the African front, the Permanent Secretariat of the Arab People's Congress emphasizes its total support for the struggles of the South African people in the face of apartheid, it stresses its solidarity with the liberation struggle of the Namibian people, it condemns the repeated attacks of the Pretoria regime against the African Frontline States, and it denounces its occupation of part of the Angolan land.

Klibi, 'Arafat Briefed on Soviet Proposal

PM041355 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 28 Jan 88 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Polyakov Briefs Klibi and 'Arafat on Soviet Proposal Concerning International Conference"]

[Text] Tunis, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Bureau—Diplomatic sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that during their meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Polyakov, the Soviet leadership's envoy, PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat and Arab League Secretary General Chedli Klibi were briefed on the details of the Soviet proposal, which paves the way for convening an international peace conference and calls for a meeting of the Security Council's five permanent states to be held at the foreign ministerial level.

The same sources added that the Soviet envoy requested that the Arab states make efforts with the United States, China, Britain, and France so that they will accept such a meeting.

The informed sources, which described the talks as positive, said that the Soviet envoy had affirmed that his country's relations with Tehran are moving in the direction of pushing Iran to agree to stop the war.

Palestinian Affairs

'National Command' Urges 'Civil Disobedience'

JN042025 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1814 GMT 4 Feb 88

["Call No 6" issued by the "Unified National Command of the Uprising in the Occupied Palestinian Territories"; date and place not given]

[Text] Brothers, the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising in the Occupied Palestinian Territories issued call No 6 today under the slogan: No Voice Shall Rise Above the Voice of the Uprising.

The new call states: Masses of our people, uprising multitudes in the camps, rural areas, and cities; you who by your will and determination have triumphed over the policy of entrenching the Zionist occupation and made your resounding voice heard throughout the world; creators of the mounting struggle action, which has snatched the initiative from the hands of the Tel Aviv rulers and put them under siege and in a position of international condemnation; you who by your struggle are paving every day and every hour the road to victory, the defeat of occupation, and the establishment of an independent national state under the leadership of the PLO, our sole, legitimate representative; our masses: In order to save the Zionist occupation from certain defeat, as well as to save Israel from a strangulating crisis and isolation on an international level, U.S. imperialism at this time is continuing to hatch plots in the region with the support of its collaborators. It is attempting to undermine the gains of the uprising by proposing plans for capitulatory solutions. Foremost among these plans are those related to the United States, such as the U.S. State Department's attempts to suggest that certain people produce an alternative to the PLO's leadership, our sole, legitimate leadership.

Our masses, in the name of our Palestinian people in the interior, who have made precious sacrifices represented by the martyrdom of scores of their most beloved sons and daughters, the thousands of detainees, the hundreds of injured, and the attacks on many of our camps, villages, and cities by the Zionists, we say in the name of our people, who have endured and are still enduring such sacrifices with courage and pride, that we affirm our rejection of all plots and all attempts by imperialism's envoys, including Philip Habib, to circumvent our legitimate leadership and to dictate surrender conditions such as recognition of Resolution 242. We affirm the determination of the people and the masses of the glorious uprising to foil all plots regardless of the different masks used by those behind them.

The PLO is our sole, legitimate representative. Therefore, whoever tries to represent the masses of the uprising from outside the PLO and to appoint a suspect leadership to make concessions and to surrender will be confronted by the Palestinian people. He will only face disappointment and miserable defeat.

Sons of our people, let us concert all efforts. Let all national key figures, organizations, and popular committees be united by a common will to escalate the uprising. Let all suitable organizations such as committees and units be formed in every area, on every street, and in every city, village, and camp in order to pave the road toward general civil disobedience as a more advanced struggle action. Disobedience means boycotting all enemy organs. It means boycotting the enemy economically and not paying taxes.

Therefore, let us climb another rung of the ladder by declaring this disobedience. Let us reinforce the spirit of sacrifice and common action following the war of molotov cocktails, stones, and the raising of flags. The disobedience will be a strong blow to the enemy, its economy, and its plunder of our people's wealth and resources. This lifeline must be cut off.

To pave the way for the implementation of this organized process, the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising calls on our workers to stop work immediately in the Israeli settlements of the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza Strip. It calls on our workers in institutions and factories to abide by the days of the general strike and to be prepared to declare a go-slow strike for a few days in all Israeli places and institutions.

O our heroic people, the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising, while greeting your heroism, sacrifices, and the epics of struggle being recorded by our people in Nabulus and in all parts of the homeland, and while emphasizing that struggle will continue, calls for the following:

The immediate resignation of the appointed municipal councils as a prelude to holding democratic elections at the appropriate time;

The [words indistinct] and abstain from paying taxes as a prelude to force the Zionist occupation authorities to cancel their [word indistinct] taxes; abstain from paying exorbitant and unfair fines imposed by the Zionist courts against the uprising detainees;

[Words indistinct] the owners of real estate not to demand rents from shopowners due to the current circumstances;

Abidance by the boycott of the agent AL-NAHAR newspaper as mentioned in the previous call; and

Urging our masses to encourage the national economy and to boycott the Israeli goods and markets and use national goods instead.

O masses of the glorious uprising, let the confrontation escalate, let demonstrations and marches be staged next week, let the popular sit-in strikes and the burning of tires continue on every street, let the stones of the uprising and the molotov cocktails pour down on the heads of the Israeli occupation soldiers, let all the lines of settlements be cut off, let crowded prayers be performed in mosques and churches as a prelude to declaring a comprehensive strike on Sunday and Monday, 7 and 8 February 1988, to mark the elapse of 2 months of the successful uprising and commemorate the fall of the first group of uprising martyrs.

Our people who are struggling to remove the occupation look forward to attaining the following direct aims to which the Israeli enemy should yield since the failure of its repressive policy has been ascertained:

1. The withdrawal of the Army from cities [words indistinct] and the lifting of the siege on the camps.

2. Ending the repression of the detainees; closing the Ansar detention camp in Gaza, as well as Al-Fari'ah and Al-Zahiriyah detention camps; and releasing all uprising detainees and rescinding all unfair imprisonment [word indistinct], fines, and other sentences handed down against them.

3. Halting work with the obsolete emergency laws.

4. Putting an end to encroachment on and desecration of holy places, removing the border guards from the courtyard of the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque, and evacuating terrorist Sharon from the holy city of Jerusalem.

5. Ending the policy of interference in the educational, trade union, press, and other institutions.

6. Holding free elections for the Palestinian municipal councils.

Our uprising people in the homeland are determined to follow the steps of our brandished rifle in Lebanon in order to attain all of their objectives.

A militant greeting to our kinfolk in the Zionist entity and the Golan. Pride in the national masses of Lebanon. The greetings of our steadfast people to the demonstrations and rallies held in Cairo, Morocco, [word indistinct], Al-Baq'ah, and Al-Wahdat. Glory to our people, the forger of a revolutionary epic. Glory and immortality to the righteous martyrs who are our candles along the path of liberation. We will triumph.

[Signed] The Unified National Command of the Uprising, the PLO, in the occupied territories

'Sons of the Country' Group Urges Rebellion

JN051001 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 0858 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Statement issued by the "Sons of the Country" movement in the universities; date not given]

[Text] Arise, O our people, there is no longer anything to lose. O our honorable people, O our people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip: The convoy of our martyrs is growing daily. There have been scores of martyrs, hundreds of wounded, and thousands of detainees, but our people will not be deterred from continuing in their proud uprising.

Our people, who continue to make sacrifices on the altar of freedom and dignity, will not weaken and will not retreat in the face of the American Zionist battering ram.

Comrade students, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are burning beneath the Zionists. The growth in the number of dead and wounded urges our people to be united and to continue their march toward liberation. The enemy has lost its nerve in the face of the popular uprising and begun to fire at our people indiscriminately and without distinguishing between an infant and an old man, a man and a woman. With the escalation of the uprising, the enemy developed his methods in an attempt to suppress it. He used rubber bullets. He resorted to beating people, even children, breaking their bones and mutilating their bodies. The use of gas caused hundreds of women to abort.

In light of these circumstances the Palestinian body was bound to unite. Our kinfolk in the Galilee, the Triangle, and the Negev arose. On 21 December, the Day of Palestine, our people arose against tyranny and Zionism. Later, a 50,000-strong demonstration was held in Nazareth. Our kinfolk inside the Green Line collected contributions and food and sent them to the besieged camps. However, is that all that we can contribute to the uprising of our kinfolk in Palestine?

The present stage requires the masses of the Galilee, the Triangle, and the Negev to escalate the methods of struggle to accompany the popular uprising in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip without delay. More demonstrations, more protests, more rebellion against the enemy and his crimes are needed to lift the siege on our people's camps and towns.

Glory and immortality to our good martyrs! Long live our people's valiant uprising! Freedom to the captives of freedom! All support to the steadfast camps! God is with us, and victory is near. Together along the path of liberating the land and man.

'National Command' Urges Uprising Escalation

JN051100 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 0912 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Statement issued by "Unified National Command of the Uprising—Action Committee"; date not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O masses of our great people in the villages adjacent to the Green Line and far from the areas where there is direct contact with the enemy, particularly the villages of Tarqumiyah, Bitula, Nuba, Kharas, and Furaysh; O you who have expressed your participation in the uprising by various forms: We assure you that you are always in our hearts. You are the true depth of the uprising.

Although the henchmen of the village leagues and those of their ilk are found in your area, the children of the village of Bitula are defying the bullets of Aysar Falah and Muhammad Abu Nijmah; they are defying all the eyes of the bats of darkness that are monitoring every revolutionary action so as to report it to the enemy, imagining that by doing so they frighten you.

We greet you and clearly emphasize the following:

All committees, students, youths, and workers must continue to escalate the uprising by:

1. Flying Palestinian flags in every possible place.

2. Demonstrating daily against the enemy.

3. Closing main streets on the days of total strikes called for in the statements of the Unified National Command of the Uprising.

4. Helping all the needy and sensing the problems of your kinfolk and assisting them in resolving them.

5. All merchants who have any other means of livelihood must comply with the full boycott of transactions with the enemy. Those who are compelled to work inside Palestine must fully observe the total strikes and are not to confront or clash with the heroes of the uprising.

6. All clergymen must carry out their sacred religious duty by calling for jihad by all available means.

7. Our sisters and mothers must take part in the uprising by contributing any piece of jewelery to support our kinfolk in the camps and the besieged villages.

As for you who have been afflicted with the enemy's malignant disease, you who have sold yourselves cheaply to the enemy, we say: The masses of our people do not want to pay attention to you or take you to task in such days. Stay at home during the uprising and follow its declared program. We warn you for the last time, those who try to harm the uprising masses—by spying, firing shots, burning leaflets, removing stones from the roads on the days of total strike, or any other action—you will be appropriately punished by the revolution. We hope that the striking squads will not be compelled to punish any of you. He who forewarns is excused.

Glory to our heroic people. Paradise and immortality to our good martyrs. God is with us and victory is near. Together along the path of liberating the land and man.

[Signed] The Unified Command—the Action Committee

Radio To Continue Despite Israeli 'Attacks'

JN050916 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 0318 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Talk entitled: "Why?"]

[Text] Brother listeners, from the 1st day of this year about 1 month ago, when the voice of Al-Quds Radio, the Palestinian Arab radio on the path of liberating the land and man, became heard, the Zionist radio—including its director general and the head of its Arab service—has been attacking Al-Quds Radio and calling it all sorts of names. Indeed, they have been instigating the Zionist authorities to find a way to silence our voice.

We ask: Why does our voice annoy them? Why do they instigate action against us? Why are they upset by our songs, news, and comments? Why, when they claim to be supporters of democracy?

They have occupied our land, expelled us, persecuted and are continuing to persecute our people and nation. Now they are disturbed because our Palestinian Arab people have a share of the airwaves. They accuse Al-Quds, the Palestinian Arab radio on the path of liberating the land and man, of fanning the fire of the sweeping popular uprising in Palestine. They accuse Al-Quds, the Palestinian Arab radio on the path of liberating the land and man, of giving instructions and broadcasting statements issued by our kinfolk throughout Palestine. They accuse Al-Quds, the Palestinian Arab radio on the path of liberating the land and man, of broadcasting the names of our heroic martyrs, the names of detainees, and the names of our struggling wounded from the ranks of our heroic people. They accuse Al-Quds, the Palestinian Arab radio on the path of liberating the land and man, of having attracted listeners of their radios and of other radios.

We, the family of Al-Quds Radio ask: Do they imagine we have any other task? Do we have any task other than being the voice of our people? In the name of our beloved capital, do we have any task other than to be with the families of our martyrs, detainees, and wounded? We ask: Do they imagine that without expressing what our people want we can survive and remain on the air?

We have a land and a people. We have the sea, mountains, trees, and we have a place under the sun. We have a share of the airwaves. The voice of our great people will continue to be heard through Al-Quds, the Palestinian Arab radio on the path of liberating the land and man, despite incitement and threats against us. It will continue because it is the voice of our people that has not died down throughout the past 40 years. Al-Quds is the radio of the Palestinian Arab people in all of Palestine. It is for every Palestinian man and woman, and will continue to be so. God is with us, and victory is at hand. Together along the path of liberating the land and man. Al-Quds—the Palestinian Arab radio on the path of liberating the land and man. Test transmission.

PLO Official Confirms 'Return Ship' Voyage

JN051007 Abu Dhabi Domestic Service in Arabic 0930 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Khalil al-Wazir, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, has asserted that the voyage of the return ship will take place on the scheduled date despite the fact that the Greek shipping company that owns the vessel has canceled its contract with the PLO.

Today's issue of AL-ITTIHAD cited Al-Wazir as saying that although the company that owns the ship has canceled the contract with the PLO, the voyage will not be canceled and the PLO will choose the appropriate means to transport the deportees aboard it. He pointed to the presence of dozens of ships that are ready to sail to occupied Palestine.

Israeli Intelligence Center Reportedly Attacked

JN032043 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1830 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Statement issued by the Palestinian military spokesman; date and place not given]

[Text] In accordance with instructions, the 'Anabta martyr group operating inside the occupied homeland planted time bombs at an enemy intelligence center in the northern part of the settlement of Nahariyya. Following this operation, the group successfully withdrew from the scene. The bombs exploded at 0730 yesterday, 2 February 1988, as the center was full of intelligence personnel. The explosion destroyed most of the center's contents and inflicted an unknown number of casualties. The enemy has admitted only one casualty.

Immediately after the operation, a large force from the enemy army besieged the area and began a large-scale search for other bombs. It also closed all roads to the settlement until noon on the same day.

Revolution until victory!

Clashes in Hebron; Israeli Soldier Wounded

JN041625 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1602 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Brother strugglers, we have just received the following report: Violent clashes took place in Hebron's Faysal Street at 1000 today, during which a Zionist soldier was stoned by the Palestinian heroes and sustained a head injury. Other clashes were reported in Wadi al-Tuffah and Bab al-Zawiyah. These later spread to Beersheba Street. The Zionist soldiers fired gunshots and tear gas bombs and arrested about 10 citizens.

Algeria

'Unionist Projects' Discussed With Libya

LD042036 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1805 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Algiers, 4 Feb (JANA)—Brother Mohamed Cherif Messaadia, member of the FLN Political Bureau and head of the Permanent Secretariat of the Central Committee, received Brother Sa'd Mustafa Mujbir, secretary of the Libyan-Arab Friendship Bureau, in sisterly Algeria yesterday.

During this meeting, they reviewed the unionist projects that have been achieved between the two brotherly countries.

Egypt

Envoy to U.S. Examines Recent Mubarak Visit

PM041311 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 27 Jan 88 p 13

[Interview with Ambassador to the United States 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Ridi by Muhammad 'Ali Salih in Washington; date not given]

[Text] [Salih] Some people say that not a great deal will be achieved during the U.S. election year in terms of visits by foreign heads of state, because U.S. politicians will be preoccupied with the election battle. Will that apply to President Mubarak's visit?

[Al-Ridi] I hope that we will not become prisoners of cliches and fancy expressions, but look to matters in our simple, natural way instead. Does the Arab nation have to wait another year on the pretext that the current U.S. Administration is about to end? Do more people have to die in the Iraq-Iran war—more than 1 million have done so thus far—awaiting a new U.S. president? Do more Palestinians have to be killed and wounded in the occupied territories because this is the year of the U.S. elections? We see the need to seize every opportunity, no matter how small, and every occasion, no matter how short, to work for the realization of peace in the region.

[Salih] Mubarak's visit to Washington has followed the Washington summit between U.S. President Ronald Reagan and CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, and it precedes the forthcoming meeting between them in Moscow. So how important is it in this regard?

[Al-Ridi] This takes me back to the previous point, which is the seizing of every opportunity and every event. The whole world is witnessing a new phase in relations between the two biggest states. Furthermore, these summit meetings are not just confined to disarmament but include regional issues as well. So there is no better time for the Arab leaders to contact the two leaders—Mubarak in Washington and King Husayn in Moscow—in this way. These are the moves I have been talking to you about.

[Salih] Before coming to Washington President Mubarak had visited a number of Arab states in the first and biggest tour of its kind. There are reports that he is carrying authorization to negotiate with America on regional issues. How true is that?

[Al-Ridi] I would not say authorization, but I would say that insofar as his tour of the Arab region preceded his visit to Washington, President Mubarak will naturally reflect the Arab collective viewpoint and speak on issues of concern to the Arab nation, especially the issue of peace in the region.

[Salih] THE WASHINGTON POST has said that these visits reflect an Egyptian diplomatic offensive.

[Al-Ridi] Let THE WASHINGTON POST say what it likes. I see Egypt working through all the efforts it has made to fulfill the demands of the Arab nation. Moreover, we note that these are historic phases through which the Arab nation is living, during which Egypt is assuming the role required of it. During a previous historic period, Egypt assumed its role in ending colonialism and foreign domination. Now the Arab nation is confronting the issue of peace so that it can build up its potential, carry out development projects, and mold the Arab person, and once again Egypt will play the role required of it.

[Salih] In a lengthy report on Egypt, William Quandt (one of the top U.S. experts on Middle Eastern affairs) has said that Congress will not agree to a comprehensive and ongoing U.S. commitment to Egypt until Egypt agrees to grant specific and regular military facilities to U.S. forces.

[Al-Ridi] Let Quandt say what he likes. I see the idea of U.S. military bases in Egypt as unacceptable, whatever the reasons and conditions. This is a clear Egyptian stand which President Mubarak has reiterated a number of times.

[Salih] In the very same report Quandt says that if the Jewish lobby in the United States were to get angry with Egypt for any reason and block U.S. aid to it, then the Administration would be unable to maintain it, despite the fact that it has become an important part in the relations between the two countries.

[Al-Ridi] Egyptian-U.S. relations are relations between two states linked by common interests based on achieving peace and stability in the region. We deal with the institutions, the Administration, Congress, and U.S. public opinion in all its sectors so as to explain our causes and the pressing Arab issues. We try to avoid taking a particular corner on the U.S. stage.

[Salih] Some Egyptian newspapers criticize—and some U.S. newspapers quote from them—the way U.S. aid is being spent in Egypt. Is it being used for political purposes, lining the pockets of the rich, and interfering in Egypt's affairs?

[Al-Ridi] We do not deal with random press reports; instead we deal with facts, and U.S. aid to Egypt is indisputably beneficial. Part of it takes the form of weapons, another the form of cash, another the form of commodities—we buy the commodities we need—and still another the form of projects, such as Abu Sultan Electricity, drainage and irrigation, and so forth. This does not mean that everything is perfect; only God is perfect. We work to improve and raise standards in the utilization of this aid.

[Salih] What about the agenda for President Mubarak's Washington talks?

[Al-Ridi] The discussion of issues of concern to the two countries, regional issues such as the international conference, the ending of the Israeli practices in the occupied territories, and the situation in the Gulf are included. In addition, President Mubarak will visit Houston to meet with sections of U.S. public opinion, and he will also meet with the U.S. media.

Mubarak Stresses Palestinian Issue During Tour

NC041549 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic
1240 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Muhammad Sharaf commentary: "The Palestinian Issue Was Given Priority During President Mubarak's European-U.S. Tour"]

[Excerpts] President Mubarak's tour of European countries and the United States, as well as his visit to Morocco, will conclude within the next couple of days. With regard to the issues discussed between the president and the leaders of these countries, and relations between Egypt and these countries, the outcome of the tour is largely positive.

Since the Palestinian issue has been the focus of attention during this tour, we will concentrate on it. To begin with, the incidents in the West Bank of the Jordan River and the Gaza Strip have proved that the Palestinian issue, which had remained stagnant for a long time, is now urgently imposing itself on the region and the entire world. Hence President Mubarak's initiative, which he launched on the eve of his trip. [passage omitted]

In all of his statements in the capitals he has visited, President Mubarak has warned about the seriousness of the situation. The initiative, with all of its positive elements, was generally welcomed and accepted in these capitals. This can also be explained by the very good timing and comprehensiveness of the initiatiave.

We are not jumping to conclusions when we say that the next stage probably will witness practical international activity to resume peace efforts in the Middle East. Indications of such activity are evident in U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz' announcement that a high-ranking U.S. envoy will visit the region soon in an attempt to arrive at a common concept of the peace process.

Here we must note that the United States has a fundamental role in the peace process in view of its close alliance with Israel and its ability to influence that country, despite its veto of the recent UN Security council draft resolution which cast doubt on a possible role. In addition to this, there have been reports on new U.S. proposals aimed at finding a way out of the current difficult situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Although details of these proposals are not yet known, reports indicate that they are related to Palestinian autonomy in the occupied territories and to later negotiations in order to settle the matter once and for all. An observer of these events cannot help but say that the U.S. stand on the convocation of an international conference for peace in the region is still vague. Yet there are indications of a possible change in this stand.

At any rate, President Mubarak's talks and his efforts in the capitals he visited indisputably have given the Palestinian issue a strong impetus. [passage omitted]

Reactions to Mubarak Peace Initiative Noted

Israel Seeks Obstruction

JN041346 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic
2 Feb 88 p 7

[Editorial: "Signs of an Israeli Campaign"]

[Text] Israel is expected to launch a propaganda campaign against the Egyptian initiative, particularly following the great success it was accorded, which was evident during President Mubarak's tour of the United States and Europe. Moves in the Isreali campaign began with the dispatching of a senior envoy of Yitzhaq Shamir to Washington during President Mubarak's visit. It is certain that his tasks included observation of the positive response to the initiative in Washington, and observing the great effect of the president's visit on various levels—from the media to the decisionmaking centers in the Congress, the Cabinet, and the White House.

The tasks of Shamir's envoy also included observation of the various trends among Jewish organizations, as conflicting stands have emerged on Israel's policy of suppression in the occupied territory. There has been strong condemnation of the iron-fist policy applied by Israel.

The signs of the propaganda campaign also include a statement by Yitzhaq Rabin, Israel's so-called "defense" minister, on U.S. television during Mubarak's visit, to

the effect that Israel is determined to continue its suppression and use of force against the Palestinians, including beating up demonstrators with truncheons. We note here the extent of defiance mixed with arrogance and disregard for U.S. and international condemnation of the policy of beating up people with truncheons. Rabin then reasserted the refusal to withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territory and the rejection of the international conference "despite the protest demonstrations."

In spite of his inflexible claims, Rabin acknowledged that there were differences within the Israeli Government over the idea of an international conference. He sought to play down such differences so that others will not have hopes that could lead the advocates of convening the conference coming out on top within the cabinet. He made a strange assertion claiming that such differences will continue until after the general elections scheduled for November. He was thus clearly hinting to the international community that it must stop exerting efforts to convene the international conference until the end of the year.

Apparently, Israel still has a great deal up its sleeve, from now and at least until Shamir's visit to Washington scheduled for March, to obstruct the efforts whose new impetus had begun, as a result of the Egyptian initiative, to give hope. Therefore, all the parties—directly or indirectly involved—as well as the United Nations, must very strongly continue the confrontation with Israel and foil its defiance and obstructive tactics by exerting efforts and pressure and by making intensive, continual, and effective moves.

Japan Voices Support

NC041549 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Japan has voiced support for President Mubarak's recent [peace] initiative and has expressed willingness to cooperate fully in order to realize the initiative's objectives. Japan has also stressed the urgent need to give momentum to the peace process through various means, including the convocation of an international conference on peace in the Middle East.

This message was sent today by the Japanese foreign minister to Dr Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs. In the message, the Japanese Government expresses deep concern for and regret over the victims of the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The message says that this ordeal will continue as long as comprehensive peace is not established in the Middle East. The Japanese Government also expresses appreciation for the efforts being made by Egypt to establish peace and stability in the Middle East, particularly after the restoration of diplomatic relations between Egypt and most of the Arab countries.

Italy Willing To Play 'Full Part'

NC050717 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2230 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Cairo, 4 Feb (MENA)—Italian Prime Minister Giovanni Goria has affirmed that the revolutionary Palestinian uprising in the occupied Arab territories has created a new factor that emphasizes the need to attain a peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis and end the Palestinian people's suffering under the occupation.

In an interview with the AL-AHRAM newspaper, to be published Friday, the Italian prime minister said that the only way to achieve peace in the Middle East is by holding an international conference. He added that the entire international community must work to bring the parties concerned closer so that an international conference may be held. Goria expressed his country's appreciation of President Husni Mubarak's initiative, which falls within this context. He added that President Mubarak's current consultations in Rome are evidence of Italy's willingness to play its full part in the peace process.

Goria said that the Amman summit was a great event in the contemporary history of the Arab countries because it achieved a transitional phase of unity among them. He noted that the restoration of some Arab states' diplomatic relations with Egypt was a significant result. The resumption of dialogue between Egypt and the Arab countries constitutes a positive element contributing to the peace process in the region, he stated.

Commenting on the Iraq-Iran war, Goria expressed regret at the failure to implement Resolution 598 calling for an end to this war. He noted that the situation requires a firm political will on everyone's part, and especially on the part of the five UN Security Council members. He voiced his belief that an end to the war between Iraq and Iran will give impetus to the strenuous process of settling other crises in the Middle East.

With regard to the possibility of Italy's contribution to the economic and industrial development process in Egypt, the Italian prime minister said that the progress of Egyptian-Italian relations is satisfactory. He pointed out that there are several important projects being financed by grants and that these projects are nearing completion. He added that a program to fund Egyptian imports from Italy by a grant worth 65 billion lire will be initiatied soon.

Ghali Confers With Cuba's Vice Foreign Minister

NC041426 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1330 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Cairo, 4 Feb (MENA)—Dr Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, today received Giraldo Mazola, Cuban vice foreign minister, who arrived in Cairo yesterday evening on a 4-day visit to Egypt. The

discussions dealt with bilateral relations and international issues of mutual concern. The Cuban official's visit to Egypt is part of a tour of a number of Middle East and nonaligned countries.

Briefs

Sinai Microwave Link Established

Hasan 'Anan, chairman of the board for radio and television, has announced that radio and television networks in central and southern Sinai are being linked by microwave with a view to boosting the signal and enlightening citizens on all issues. He also announced that the project of linking the Tabah transmission with Aqaba is being finalized to ensure good reception in Egypt and Jordan, as well as other neighboring Arab states. The project is due to become operational at the end of April. [Excerpt] [*Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 3 Feb 88 p 8 JN*]

Mauritania

New Law on Provinces, Locust Threat Noted

LD040243 Nouakchott Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Excerpts] This morning, Wednesday, 3 February 1988, the Council of Ministers met under the chairmanship of Colonel Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, CMSN chairman and head of state.

During the meeting, the Council approved a draft law, which cancels and replaces Law No 128/83 issued on 5 June 1983 concerning provincial administration. This law aims at establishing a transitional period of 2 years during which the organization of the provincial administration could be reviewed. The establishment of this transitional period comes after the formation of the municipalities, whose existence puts the future of the province in question. Until the establishment of the municipalities, the province had been the decentralized provincial unit in our regime.

During this transitional period, all provinces, such as E-n-Ouadibou, Tiris-Zemmour, Inchiri, and Nouakchott, will be administrative constituencies, which enjoy neither nominal personality nor financial independence.

The province will be under the authority of a governor, who will be appointed by a decree and who will be the representative of the state there. [passage omitted]

The rural development minister presented a report about the development of the situation with regard to a threat from swarms of migrating locusts. The situation calls for great concern now because of the high temperature and the gathering of numerous locust swarms at the provincial level, especially in Adrar Province.

The Council of Ministers expressed concern with this situation and appealed to international organizations to consolidate their aid to destroy this pest, whose effects could be tragic, especially on the existing grassland and the coming 1988-1989 agricultural year. [passage omitted]

Taya Receives Burkinabe Minister, Message

AB311738 Noukchott Domestic Service in French 1430 GMT 31 Jan 88

[Summary From Poor Reception] "Colonel Maaouya Sid'Ahmed Ould Taya, chairman of the CMSN and head of state, this morning received Prosper Frederic Korsaga, Burkinabe minister of commerce and people's supply, who delivered a message of greetings from the Burkinabe president, Blaise Compaore, to his Mauritanian counterpart. The meeting took place in the presence of Hamdi Samba Diop, minister of commerce and transport." After this meeting, the Burkinabe minister briefed reporters about his conversation with the head of state.

Korsaga stated: "I would first of all like to thank the president for promptly receiving me. I bore a personal message from Popular Front Chairman Captain Blaise Compaore to his brother and friend, Col Maaouya Ould Taya." The message contains New Year's greetings and also an invitation to the International Fair of African Handicrafts, which opens in Ouagadougou in February. The fair is open to all African countries, including Mauritania.

Morocco

Transfer of U.S. F-16's From Spain Denied

LD041854 Rabat MAP in Arabic 1530 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Rabat, 4 Feb (MAP)—The Moroccan Government has categorically denied an AFP Washington-datelined report citing the Moroccan ambassador in the United States as having suggested that U.S. F-16 aircraft, which are to be withdrawn from the Torejon Base in Spain, be transferred to Morocco.

The Moroccan Government has affirmed that this report does not accord with Morocco's political line. The Moroccan Embassy in Washingtdon issued the same denial in a report published yesterday.

Diplomatic Relations Established With Maldives

LD041849 Rabat MAP in Arabic 1530 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Rabat, 4 Feb (MAP)—In order to strengthen the ties of friendship and cooperation between the peoples and governments of the Republic of Maldives and the Kingdom of Morocco, and in accordance with the UN

Charter, the governments of the Republic of Maldives and the Kingdom of Morocco have decided to establish diplomatic relations at the nonresident level beginning February 1988.

The two governments voice hope that the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries will help to promote fruitful cooperation between them.

Sudan

Lebanese Radio Interviews SPLM Representative

NC041052 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in English 0830 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Interview with Dr Benjamin, representative of Colonel John Garang, leader of the SPLM, in London; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Correspondent] Through Radio Free Lebanon, would you like to pass on a certain message to the Lebanese Christians and other Christians in the area?

[Benjamin] Yes, I think there is lot to say to the people of Lebanon and the Lebanese Christians: that the sad situation in Lebanon, where the Muslims are massacring Christians and where there is a lot of fundamentalism trying to take over in Lebanon without tolerance, is a great lesson to those of us in the Sudan, because it is a warning. And I think it will be very unwise for us in the Sudan not to learn the lessons of Lebanon. And also it is a great honor for Radio Free Lebanon to give us the chance so that our voices are heard. And our only request is that the problem in the Sudan in as far as the religious aspect of it is concerned, is exactly the same like what is happening in Lebanon. And we would seek more friendship, more cooperation, and more helping each other. A brother in need is a brother indeed, and a friend in need is a friend indeed. So we would expect the brotherly people of Lebanon and the Christians in particular to respond to help the suffering people in southern Lebanon. Thank you very much for your short time. In spite of your problems, you have given us the time when you yourselves are under heavy bombardment from this similar Islamic fundamentalism.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much indeed, Dr Benjamin.

Tunisia

Al-Qadhdhafi Makes Statement on Arrival 4 Feb

LD041851 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1811 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Excerpts] Tunis, 4 Feb (JANA)—The brother leader of the revolution arrived at Tunis-Carthage international airport this evening on a visit to sisterly Tunisia. [passage omitted]

During his visit to sisterly Tunisia, the brother leader of the revolution is accompanied by Brigadier al-Khuyalidi al-Humaydi. He is also accompanied by the secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and the secretary of the General People's Committee for Public Service. At Tunis-Carthage international airport, the brother leader of the revolution made a statement to journalists in which he said: I am happy today to be among my family and in my beloved green Tunisia, and to meet for the first time my Brother Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, president of the Republic of Tunisia.

I am pleased to meet with him, to congratulate him and his brothers and the people of Arab Tunisia, to voice my support to him, and to convey to him the support of his brother Libyans. I am pleased to hold talks and to decide whatever might unite this destitute, humiliated, and victimized nation. The time has come for this nation to unite its destitute people, to confront the hostile challenges, to face underdevelopment, and to make progress in order to achieve its proper position on earth and under the sun.

Holds Talks With Ben Ali

LD041903 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Excerpts] Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi arrived on a visit to our country this evening at the invitation of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. [passage omitted]

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali accompanied Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi to the Essaada Palace in La Marsa where they had a brief discussion. It was attended on the Tunisian side by Hedi Baccouche and a number of members of the government, and on the Libyan side by the members of the delegation accompanying Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi: Major al-Khuyalidi al-Humaydi; Jadallah 'Azzur al-Talhi, secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison; and Fawzi al-Shakshuki, secretary of the People's General Committee for Public Service.

Cabinet Meeting on Maghreb Ties, Other Issues

LD031518 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Excerpts] At 1000 this morning at the Government Palace in Casbah, His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali chaired a Cabinet meeting that examined the results of the prime minister's visit to a number of Arab states and the results of the Moroccan prime minister's visit to Tunisia.

The Cabinet also looked into the file on Tunisian-Libyan cooperation, as well as at several bills, one of them concerning the organization of the video sector. The other bills concerned the ratification of cooperation agreements with a number of sisterly and friendly states. [passage omitted]

His Excellency Zine El Abidine Ben Ali also acquainted himself with the main aspects of the draft program of the National Society of Tunisian Towns for 1988, which deal in particular with the cleanliness and protection of the environment and the training of municipal cadres, in addition to an improvement in the services provided to citizens by the municipal departments.

This took place during a meeting between the head of state and Mohamed Ali Boulayman, chairman of the National Society of Tunisian Towns, in the presence of the interior minister.

Sahbani on Maghreb Unity, Al-Qadhdhafi Visit

PM041651 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
29 Jan 88 pp 34, 35

[Interview with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Taieb Sahbani by 'Affaf Zayn; date and place not given]

[Text] AL-HAWADITH: What was the political decision behind your visit to Cairo? And what about the letter you delivered?

Sahbani: My visit to Cairo was basically not aimed at considering the issue of normalizing relations between Tunis and Cairo. Our relations were never discontinued, despite the severing of ties after Baghdad [Arab League summit in 1979 which called for the diplomatic and economic isolation of Egypt]. We kept an office with a high-ranking diplomat to look after Tunisian affairs.

In deciding to normalize relations with Egypt, Tunisia acted in accordance with the decision of the recent Arab summit in Amman. It was a decision we abided by, as we previously abided by the Baghdad summit decision to sever relations.

AL-HAWADITH: You are linked to Algeria by a treaty which requires consultations on disputed issues, and these provisions apply to relations with Egypt. Did consultations take place with Algeria shortly before your decision to resume relations with Cairo? Was the Jamahiriyah—a candidate to join the treaty—warned about the decision?

Sahbani: Within the sphere of the Arab Maghreb there are traditions we established long ago which require consultations in order to first build the Arab Maghreb, as we desire. Consultations between us, especially with Algeria, are an essential matter within the framework of the accord and entente treaty.

Concerning our decision to resume relations with Egypt, I would like to say that consultations took place between Tunisia and Algeria. Furthermore, we exchanged viewpoints with our brothers in the Jamahiriyah and Mauritania concerning what we ought to do following the extraordinary Amman summit. I confirm that consultations took place. It remains for each sovereign country to deduce what it ought to do within the scope of its sovereignty and independent policymaking. My visit was made for consultations and an exchange of views. Moreover, relations with Cairo will be resumed shortly.

AL-HAWADITH: You are confirming that consultations have taken place between Tunisia, Algeria, and the Jamahiriyah. So what is your opinion about claims that one of the reasons for the postponement of Colonel al-Qadhdhafi's visit was your decision to resume relations with Egypt? Have you been officially informed of this matter?

Sahbani: There has been some exaggeration in the search for reasons and motives to explain the postponement of Al-Qadhdhafi's visit. The colonel was supposed to visit us 11 January. There was also a previous agreement between Tunisia and Algeria relating to Bendjedid's visit to Tunisia in the 1st week of the month. It was difficult for the Algerian president to come as scheduled so he visited us 10 January and stayed with us 2 days. The postponement of the colonel's visit was due to preparations to welcome President Bendjedid in Tripoli following his departure from Tunisia. Out of a desire to maintain an atmosphere of unity, it was assumed that the postponement would not be given great importance. Perhaps the colonel has set another date to visit us.

AL-HAWADITH: The importance of the postponement lies in the possibilities which have been mentioned concerning the convening of a quadrilateral summit in Tunisia between the leaders of the fraternity treaty and Colonel al-Qadhdhafi. It is only natural that Algeria initiated mediation efforts last summer. Do you think the chances for this summit have diminished?

Sahbani: Only media sources have speculated about this quadrilateral summit. There is no official decision in this regard. The media is trying to create a fuss over the matter. Col al-Qadhdhafi decided to postpone his visit, I think, to afford the Algerian president the opportunity to visit Tunisia and the Jamahiriyah. We proposed a date to the colonel which was not in agreement with his agenda, and I am sure another date will be set shortly for his visit to Tunisia.

AL-HAWADITH: In your opinion, what are the possibilities for expanding the fraternity and accord treaty after all these new developments? And is there any indication that the Jamahiriyah might join it?

Sahbani: Concerning the Jamahiriyah, everyone ought to know that Tripoli has not submitted an official request indicating its intention to rally under this unity umbrella. As long as Tripoli has not come to a decision on the matter, it is premature to talk about a quadrilateral agreement.

AL-HAWADITH: Tripoli sees a merged union as the ideal formula, while you and Algeria prefer an integrated unity formula retaining a degree of national sovereignty.

Do you think that the reason for the Libyan rebuff of all the new Tunisian developments is the Jamahiriyah's basic understanding of the concept of union?

Sahbani: The union we are looking for is not a merger like the Djerba treaty of 1974 between us and Libya. We are advocating a union in which each country retains its complete sovereignty. The union, as we see it, is an expression of coordination and a basis for cooperation, integration, and solidarity. We resumed our relations with Tripoli on the basis of an independent political decision, which means that we will retain our political line and our options based on our national interests, taking into account the conditions which will pave the way for creating Maghreb unity.

AL-HAWADITH: Do you think that the Libyan understanding of union has developed in the direction of integration formulas since the experience of the Djerba treaty in 1974?

Sahbani: Yes, the thinking of Libyan officials has developed greatly since the Djerba experience, and they have started to think that merger is not the ideal formula in the light of contemporary developments. I formed this impression from what I heard from Libyan officials who still have the ambition to set up a merged union from the Atlantic to the Gulf.

AL-HAWADITH: Perhaps we should point to Rabat's fears of the possibility that the extension of the union—the fraternity and concord treaty—to include Libya would lead to Morocco's isolation. Editorials in the Independence Party newspaper reflect these apprehensions. What is Mauritania's opinion on the matter?

Sahbani: That is a question to be answered by our brothers in the Mauritanian capital, and I cannot predict their positions. Let it be known that Tunisia is aiming for a complete and all-embracing Arab Maghreb, and there is no greater Maghreb without the Moroccan Kingdom.

Interior Minister on Security, Press, Party Laws

JN041755 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic
2 Feb 88 p 11

[Interview with Interior Minister Habib Ammar by Najib al-Furayji in Tunis; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Furayji] How do you view security in Tunisia in the post 7 November stage? How do you compare security in this stage to the previous one?

[Ammar] Security is based on the clear concept of safeguarding society from various social diseases, preserving citizens' souls and properties, confronting delinquency and violence in all of its forms, and maintaining good manners, in addition to safeguarding the Republic and the safety of its borders.

A new security philosophy was adopted in the historic 7 November statement. It established that, thanks to the degree of awareness the Tunisian people have reached, they have become qualified to participate in public life at all levels and spheres. Thus, the security mission has become a collective responsibility among all Tunisians with all their social sectors and political and ideological orientations.

The 7 November transformation has also made people feel reassured and secure. It has made citizens fight to preserve national gains and eager to maintain the strength of our republican system and constitutional institutes. This profound feeling of safety and security is the basis of our new security philosophy which was publicized in the 7 November statement and the laws and measures that followed which entrenched this approach. [passage omitted]

[Al-Furayji] The confiscation and suspension of newspapers is an issue that has not been settled. Will there be an effective law in this regard? What is the role of newsmen and owners of media establishments in formulating the recently announced press law?

[Ammar] His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali took pioneering measures to entrench freedom in the press and to promote the media sector in view of the extreme importance of this sector and its major role in explaining the orientations of the 7 November statement. Within this framework, a new draft law has been prepared to organize the press. The most important charateristic of this law is its liberal nature which is in line with guaranteeing freedom of expression in the press. This freedom is stipulated by the eighth chapter of the country's Constitution.

As for suspension, the proposed law limits the government's interference, and it will no longer be authorized to suspend newspapers. When there is an extreme necessity, the government's role will be confined to seizing the issue in question if it contains something that would jeopardize the system and public security. It is known that seizure is a legal measure effective in all countries. The judiciary and the courts will be authorized to carry out suspensions. [passage omitted]

[Al-Furayji] What about party pluralism and the parties law?

[Ammar] Party pluralism has become a tangible reality in Tunisia since 7 November. The president himself is eager to achieve real party pluralism. This has been made particularly clear through his frequent meetings and those of the prime minister with the political leaders in Tunisia. Allowing the legal opposition parties to participate in the party legislative elections under the law, and the government's neutrality are further evidence of its honest intentions. Pluralism in Tunisia is no longer a mere hollow slogan.

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali is eager to follow up on this progress by preparing the new party draft law which will organize this pluralism within the framework of essential orientations based on rejecting fanaticism and violence, respecting the republican system and constitutional principles, and safeguarding national gains and a lack of all forms of subservience to foreign regimes or forces. [passage omitted]

[Al-Furayji] What is the effect of the 7 November change in dealing with fundamentalists?

[Ammar] Our dealings with all parties stem from and are based on respect for the country's laws.

[Al-Furayji] What are the possible areas for cooperation in the security field on the Arab Maghreb level?

[Ammar] The existing Arab cooperation on the level of the Arab Interior Ministers Council Secretariat and its specialized bureaus has reached a satisfactory level. In addition, there is bilateral cooperation between the Tunisian, Algerian, and Moroccan security organs. This cooperation is multidimensional and includes exchange of expertise and information, and the training of cadres. [passage omitted]

[Al-Furayji] Is it expected that a law will be issued pardoning and rehabilitating the nationalist figures in the diaspora?

[Ammar] Tunisia is open to all of its sons. Tunisians residing abroad and against whom no judical sentences have been issued can return whenever they like. Those against whom sentences have been issued are required to rectify their situation with the judiciary.

Bahrain

Foreign Minister Meets With Indian Official

JN031757 Manama WAKH in English 1620 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Text] Manama, Feb 3 (GNA)—Official talks between Bahrain and India were held today and co-chaired by Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah and the Indian State minister for External Affairs Eduardo Faleiro.

The talks centered on ways of boosting bilateral relations, the Gulf and Arab developments, the Iraq-Iran war and ways of ending the Gulf war peacefully in accordance with the U.N. Security Council Resolution 598, the Palestinian question and the situation in South East Asia and the Indian Ocean.

The talks on the Bahraini side was attended by Director of the Political Directorate 'Ali Ibrahim al-Mahrus, the Ambassador at the Foreign Ministry Court Husayn Rashid al-Sabbagh, Bahraini Consul General to India Hamad al-Amir and on the Indian side by ambassador to Bahrain M. Menon and the delegation accompanying the Indian minister.

The Indian external affairs minister arrived in Manama last night on a few day visit to Bahrain.

Indian Minister Leaves Manama

JN051303 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1235 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Excerpt] Manama, 5 Feb (WAKH)—Eduardo Faleiro, Indian minister of state for external affairs, left Manama for Abu Dhabi at noon today at the end of a 4-day visit to Bahrain as part of a tour of GCC countries. During the visit, the Indian minister delivered a message to His Highness Shaykh 'Isa ibn Salman Al Khalifah, the amir of Bahrain, from Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on bilateral realtions. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

New Defense Minister on Security Issues

PM041715 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 28 Jan 88 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Nawwaf al-Ahmad Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: No Bargaining on Our Homeland's Security; Up to Kuwaitis To Judge Saboteurs"]

[Text] The Gulf—New Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, the former interior minister, has stressed: There will be no bargaining on Kuwait's security, and the judgment of those who sought to commit sabotage acts in "our homeland" is a 100 percent Kuwaiti affair. And we will deal with those detained for sabotage crimes according to the principles of justice and law, but we will reject all pressures.

Shaykh Nawwaf made these statements to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT shortly before he left the post of interior minister in the Cabinet reshuffle the day before yesterday in order to assume the defense portfolio.

He said that the sabotage acts Kuwait has witnessed in recent years were a result of the Gulf war. Shaykh Nawwaf did not specifically identify the quarters behind such acts, but said that Kuwait has confronted terrorism and and sabotage with resolution, firmness, and more wisdom and impartiality in order to identify those who had planned and implemented the criminal acts as well as those behind them.

The Kuwaiti minister firmly stated: Our security action is proceeding according to a long-term strategy based on complete awareness and readiness to foil any attempt aimed at undermining Kuwait's security and stability.

Asked about cooperation between Kuwait and the other GCC states in exchanging information concerning terrorist groups, Shaykh Nawwaf replied: Cooperation between us and the brothers in the GCC states is not confined to combating terrorism; indeed it extends to all security fields through coordination, consultation, exchange of information, and the provision of support and backing. With luck the GCC security agreement will increase both the effectiveness and the influence of such cooperation.

With regard to cooperation with foreign states in pursuing and arresting saboteurs, he said: There is cooperation between Kuwait and most states of the world in security fields via protocols, agreements, or Interpol.

As to whether the campaign for voluntary service has succeeded in terms of civil defense, which many Kuwaitis have joined in order to foil sabotage actions, the former interior minister, now defense minister, said that awareness and a sense of public responsibility are among the ambitions Interior Ministry organs seek to foster, since citizens' awareness is the firm basis of security action. Undoubtedly the fact that many sons of the homeland have volunteered to join civil defense units is an indication of such patriotic awareness, which is a constituent and an important element of the security process.

ARAB TIMES on Indian Official's Visit

JN041141 Kuwait ARAB TIMES in English 2 Feb 88 p 4

[By Hamid Siddiqul]

[Excerpts] India considers the Iraq-Iran conflict as very unfortunate and fully supports the UN Security Council Resolution 598 calling for an immediate ceasefire in the Gulf war, the Indian State Minister for External Affairs, Eduardo Faleiro, said last night.

The minister said he delivered a message from the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to HH [His Highness] the Amir of Kuwait dealing with the Iraq-Iran war, the prevailing situation in the Gulf region and bilateral relations.

The minister also called on HH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah and held extensive talks with the Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad and the State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sa'ud Muhammad al-'Usaymi. Faleiro described the talks as highly fruitful. [passage omitted]

Faleiro addressed a gathering of Goan community and assured them that the Kuwait-Goa direct flight, which he said has been suspended because of some operational problems, will be resumed this summer.

He also assured the nonresident Indians that their investments in their homeland is safe and has not been affected by the recent crash in the international stock exchange market.

Faleiro will today meet Kuwait's Commerce and Industry Minister Faysal 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Khalid and Chairman of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, before leaving for Bahrain.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Comments on Role of 'Shield Force'

LD041247 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1025 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Excerpts] Hafr al-Batin, 4 Feb (SPA)—King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, received at his residence in Hafr al-Batin last night the commander and officers of the King Khalid Military City, those of the northern region, and officers from the peninsula's Shield Force. [passage omitted]

King Fahd expressed his pride in the establishment of the GCC and its achievements for its members' people on a political, economic, social, and military level, adding that the creation of the peninsula's Shield Force is one of the fruits of this activity.

The custodian of the two holy mosques went on to say that this is made possible through the bases of cooperation available among the council members and their common objective, destiny, and Islamic faith. [passage omitted]

The dearly beloved king affirmed that the GCC members rely first of all on God Almighty and then on the strong arms of their sons to safeguard their security and stability, saying: "The Gulf force is not directed against anyone but it will not allow anyone to attack it. Gulf coordination and cooperation are primarily aimed at serving the interests of the Arab and Islamic nations."

The custodian of the two holy mosques added that GCC members have made and continue to make efforts to unify Arab and Islamic ranks. [passage omitted]

The audience was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation, and inspector general; His Royal Highness Prince Salman ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, amir of the Riyadh region; His Royal Highness Prince Faysal ibn Sa'ud ibn Muhammad; His Royal Highness Air Major Sultan ibn Salman ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz; and His Royal Highness Prince Abd al-'Aziz ibn Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz.

United Arab Emirates

Reportage on Visit by Czechoslovak Official

Arrives 2 Feb

JN022150 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1858 GMT 2 Feb 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 2 Feb (WAKH)—Dosan Alkayk, under secretary of the CSSR Foreign Ministry [name and title as received], arrived in Abu Dhabi from Kuwait this evening on a 2-day visit to the UAE. The Czechoslovak official is bringing a message to His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, UAE president, from CSSR President Gustav Husak. During the visit, the Czechoslovak official will hold talks with a number of UAE officials on issues of mutual concern.

Delivers Husak Message

JN041707 Manama WAKH in English 1621 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb 3 (GNA)—UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan received a written message from Czechoslovak President Gustav Husak dealing with his country's desire to promote relations between the two countries.

The message was handed to UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Rashid 'Abdallah by visiting Undersecretary at the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry Dosan Alkayk.

A responsible source at the Foreign Ministry told Emirates News Agency (WAM) that the meeting reviewed the dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the situation in the Gulf and other international and regional issues.

'Abdallah concentrated his talks on the Middle East issue in the light of the continuation of the uprising of the Palestinian people in occupied Arab territories, the Gulf issue and the Afghan problem.

He stressed the need to extend all possible help to the Palestinian people to restore their legitimate rights including rights for self determination and independence.

On the situation in the Gulf, 'Abdallah stressed the need to intensify efforts to end the Iraq-Iran war and implement the UN Security Council Resolution No. 598.

He also said the Afghan problem was discussed in the light of the Soviet readiness to withdraw its troops from that country, adding Afghanistan independence, its Islamic and non-aligned stands should be preserved.

The source added Alkayk expressed satisfaction over the identical views charged by the two countries on regional and international issues including the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Czechoslovakia, he added, supports the struggle of the Palestinian people for freedom and independence.

It supports the UN Security Council Resolution No. 598 and calls on all parties to implement it. It also supports imposing sanctions on the refusing party.

Official Departs

JN040953 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0835 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 4 Feb (WAKH)—Dosan Alkayk, under secretary of the CSSR Foreign Ministry, left Abu Dhabi for home early today following a 2-day visit to the UAE. The CSSR official conveyed a message to His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, the UAE president, from CSSR President Gustav Husak. He also held talks with Rashid 'Abdallah, UAE minister of state for foreign affairs, on developments in the Gulf region and the Middle East and on current international and regional issues.

Air Transport Agreement Signed With Bulgaria

JN031834 Manama WAKH in English 1627 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb 3 (GNA)—The United Arab Emirates and Bulgaria initially signed an agreement to regulate air transport between the two countries.

The agreement was signed on the UAE side by Muhammad Yahya al-Suwaydi, assistant undersecretary for financial, administrative and civil aviation affairs at the UAE Ministry of Communications, while Velichko Filipov Velichkov, Bulagrian first deputy minister of transport, signed on his country side.

Al-Suwaydi said following the initial signing of the agreement that the two-day official talks were the first of their kind between the UAE and Bulgaria to regulate air transport.

He told Emirates news agency (WAM) that both sides agreed to name Gulf Air and Emirates Airlines as the national carriers of the UAE and Balkan Airline as the national carrier of Bulgaria.

Al-Suwaydi said Bulgarian carrier will land at five UAE airports while the UAE carriers will land at three airports in Bulgaria.

They also named as stopovers for both carriers Cairo, Kuwait, Amman, Damascus, Baghdad, Larnaca, Beirut, Istanbul and Tehran.

They agreed on tax exemptions on fuel and spare parts and to hold consultations on the schedules of their weekly flights.

Balkan Airlines is currently making a weekly flight to Dubai through Kuwait and is studying the possibility of increasing the flights and further extensions to states in South East Asia.

Yeman Arab Republic

Soviet Geology Minister, Delegation Arrive

JN031737 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Text] USSR Geology Minister Yevgeniy Kozlovskiy and his accompanying delegation arrived in Sanaa this morning on a visit scheduled to last several days. In a statement to SABA', the Soviet official said that he and his delegation will hold talks with officials in the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources on aspects of cooperation in order to reinforce and strengthen relations between our country and the USSR.

The Soviet official was received by Ahmad Muhani, minister of petroleum and mineral resources; the under secretary of the ministry; Veniamin Popov, the Soviet ambassador in Sanaa; and a representative of the Protocol Department at the Foreign Ministry.

Salih Receives Minister

JN051300 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Brother Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress, this morning received at the Presidential Palace in Ta'izz USSR Geology Minister Yevgeniy Kozlovskiy, who handed him a letter from the Soviet leadership. They discussed bilateral cooperation in petroleum and mineral wealth.

The meeting was attended by Brothers Dr Hasan Makki, deputy prime minister and Standing Committee member; Dr 'Abd al-Karim al-'Iryani, deputy prime minister, foreign minister, and Standing Committee member; and Ahmad 'Ali Muhani, minister of petroleum and mineral resources.

Foreign Minister Comments on PDRY Ties

PM041211 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 29 Jan 88 p 33

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Dr 'Abd al-Karim al-'Iryani by Zaki Shihab; date and place not given]

[Text] AL-HAWADITH: How do you view the U.S. and British positions on the situation in the occupied Arab territories?

Al-'Iryani: The European position is generally more positive than the U.S. position, which has only gone as far the media side of matters. However, my assessment is that there is nothing positive about the U.S. Administration when dealing with the Palestinian matter. As far as the political aspect is concerned there are no new indicators, while you can see a clear media and political positivity from the EEC.

AL-HAWADITH: How do you explain the U.S. approval for the first time in 6 years of a UN draft resolution condemning the Israeli position?

AL-'Iryani: There is no indication of a change in the U.S. position, as I mentioned in reply to a previous question. The vote which took place was to condemn the principle of expelling the population under occupation—a principle prohibited by the Geneva conventions.

In reality, the United States had no other option than to vote in favor of the resolution adopted, and this stand must not be given more than its worth, because had the United States vetoed the resolution it would have been a veto against an international principle. It is true that America had an alternative, which was to abstain from voting in favor of the resolution, but that would have meant its disavowing charters it has signed.

AL-HAWADITH: In your opinion, what should Arab efforts concentrate on during this phase?

Al-'Iryani: We have no wish to anticipate events. The logical thing is that they should concentrate on supporting the Palestinian citizens in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and provide them with all that is necessary to support them, because they are in a state of siege, hunger, and tribulation. Therefore, priority ought to be given to dealing with their causes.

AL-HAWADITH: Will Resolution 598 relating to ending the war in the Gulf follow the other UN resolutions, which have been filed away? And what about the time limit given to the side which has refused to comply with the international resolution?

Al-'Iryani: I do not think they have been forgotten in the way you have mentioned. Perhaps there is some delay, but they cannot be forgotten, and I foresee positive moves over the coming weeks.

AL-HAWADITH: PDRY Minister for Union Affairs Rashid Thabit has recently announced that decisions will shortly be taken to strengthen unity between the two parts of Yemen. What is the nature of these decisions?

Al-'Iryani: God willing, we would like that to be in the interests of all the sons of Yemen. We are optimistic about a good outcome.

AL-HAWADITH: Following the start of oil exports from the YAR, there is increasing talk of starting cooperation between Sanaa and Aden to extract oil from the regions adjoining the border between the two countries. How will that be done?

AL-'Iryani: The contacts are ongoing and the discussion is continuing between officials in the two countries; the focus is on the purely technical aspects. There are no borders in the sense of frontiers; we are one country and one people.

AL-HAWADITH: How would you justify the clashes which broke out on the border with the PDRY?

AL-'Iryani: They were of a fleeting nature and occurred at ordinary levels, and they are not worth talking about.

AL-HAWADITH: To what extent will the current conflict between the present regime in Aden and the presence of [former] President 'Ali Nasir and his supporters in Sanaa affect the realization of unity between the two parts of Yemen?

Al-'Iryani: It is a purely internal issue and I do not wish to talk about it.

AL-HAWADITH: The parliament in Aden at its fifth session recently declared its intention to ask for the return of those sentenced and those living outside the country. This is an indication of the intention to ask Sanaa to hand over former President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad and some of his followers.

Al-'Iryani: We have not been informed by any side about anything.

AL-HAWADITH: Do you anticipate the convening of an international conference in the near future to settle the Palestinian problem after the increased uprising in the occupied territories?

Al-'Iryani: There is nothing to indicate that the situation is more positive than it was prior to the uprising.

AL-HAWADITH: How can the sufferings of the Arab population in the occupied territories be alleviated?

Al-'Iryani: By working with the means available through contacts with the international community, and by continuing the endeavor for a fundamental and final settlement because that is an Arab duty.

Saddam Husayn on Arab Position Toward Gulf War
JN281708 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
28 Jan 88 pp 3-5

["Text" of President Saddam Husayn's interview with Saudi journalists 'Abdallah al-Husayn of AL-MADINAH, Khalil al-Fazi of AL-YAWM, and Muhammad al-Wa'il of AL-JAZIRAH, in Baghdad on 12 January]

[Text] The President: You are welcome. I read your questions when I was on my way here by car. How do you want to do it? Shall I answer your questions or shall we hold a dialogue on all issues you have in mind and then have you deduce the results? I prefer the second method, as the first is the traditional question and answer format. The second method has more analytical value. If you have no objection, let us use the second method. Let us sit as Arabs and discuss all the issues and phenomena that concern us and then draw lessons from them that will be useful to us. Suit yourselves. I am confident you will act in a way that will serve the pan-Arab cause, Islam, and humanitarian issues in general. Is that not so?

When the audience agreed, the president said: Then let us begin our dialogue. You can ask your questions, but that does not mean we will follow the traditional format. Instead, we will expand our answers and analyses. Once that is done, you will distill everything that you see as useful. After you have gotten your impression of this dialogue, you will deduce the useful results. I also have no objection if you want to deduce the questions and answers from this dialogue.

Journalists: First, we must thank the president. Allow me to begin by thanking Your Excellency and Iraq for this invitation and the confidence you have in the Saudi portion of the Arab media. We are undoubtedly required, as are the Arab people, particularly the intellectuals and the able generations, to be in one trench with Iraq's people and soldiers. Our feelings and convictions should also spring from Iraq's status as the bastion of Arab steadfastness in today's battle, which is a historic battle of revenge. Once again, and on behalf of my brothers, I thank you and express our appreciation of President Saddam Husayn, an inspired hero.

The President: May God bless and preserve you all.

Journalists: The pressing question in several people's minds is of course the war issue. It is all the Arabs' major concern. However, the question which thus far has not been answered is: What are Iran's objectives behind the escalation and continuation of the war?

The President: We are meeting for the first time in this manner. To give you a clear answer, I should go back to the beginning of the war. You, as educated Arabs, should not be concerned only about writing answers to the questions, but also about playing a major role to manipulate public opinion to serve your beliefs. Khomeyni constitutes a state of backwardness in Iran. However, he aspires to establish a true empire. In his writings, he thinks that Shi'ites in Iran are the majority of the Shi'ites in the Arab region and the Middle East in general. As a result of historical developments, our people, as you must know, are comprised of Shi'ites and Sunnis. We are discussing the subject without embarrassment; it never came up before. I know that Hamid comes from a Sunni family but I do not know about Hani: Is he Sunni or Shiite? I know, however, that his folks are in Al-Fahamah in north Baghdad, and that's it.

It is our policy to judge people by their actions. Their creed and the thinking of their families is beside the point. That is how we approach and see things. Ideally, we would have liked Iraq to be one nation, one religion, and one creed. But in reality there is more than one nation, more than one religion. There are Christians, Muslims, Arabs, Kurds, Shi'ites, and Sunnis. Given a wholesome environment, this plurality can enrich the country's psyche and outlook through an integrated awareness of the present and future. To repeat myself: Khomeyni think that the Shi'ite fulcrum is in Iran, and that he speaks for the entire Shi'ite community, at least in the Middle East. Through historical evolution, including the period when the Arabs were ruled by the Turks, who had a sectarian tendency, Khomeyni believes that now is the time for the Shi'ites, whom he represents, to build an empire in the Arab world.

If the Turks managed to rule the Arabs for hundreds of years, the Iranians can do likewise. That is especially true given this common feature: There are 50 million Turks and just as many Iranians. This explanation is plausible, as the Israelis are sensitive to pan-Arab feelings, and are attempting to break the unity of the Arab world. Furthermore, the Israelis are more than just an entity in the occupied territories; they are the sum total of the interests of world Jewry plus their influence in the countries of East and West. The Zionist octopus will make it possible to hurt the Arab nation.

Khomeyni thinks that inter-Arab differences will allow him to crush the Arabs in stages, and by imposing a status quo on a world swayed more by interests than principles. He believes he can build an empire and serve the interests of this or that party in the East or West in exchange for their connivance with his hegemony over the entire Arab homeland, its wealth, and ideology. He thinks power and hegemony can even change creeds. He thinks that over the years, he can turn Arab Muslims or the Muslims of the Middle East into "Iranian-style Shi'ites." I want that last phrase to be in quotes, as we still think there is a religion in Iran, but it is not Islam. I will come to that later. We have proof and signs of this. We have been monitoring it for at least 8 years. We have studied and analyzed their mind-set, and have drawn the necessary conclusions.

Khomeyni thinks that 50 million people can overwhelm small bodies and grow bigger on the ruins of those who are crushed morally, intellectually, and materially, until

he launches his empire. He is helped in this scheme by the fact he can mobilize 10 million of Iran's 50 million people, thus imitating the form rather than the substance of the state of the early Muslims.

Khomeyni says the early Muslims turned the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula into a cadre for Muslims and ruled in Iraq, Egypt, the Arab Maghreb, and so on. There is one fact he did not take inot account, one he should not forget. The Iraqis, the Egyptians, and the Syrians are Arabs, and God's message was revealed through his angel Gabriel to Muhammad, not Khomeyni. He claims that as long as such a thing is possible, and happened under the Turks, when a foreign state ruled in the name of religion, we can take 7 or 10 million Iranians and spread them as a cadre in the Arab countries. We can send a million people, some of them of Iranian origin, to Iraq to rule and we can send 250,000 Iranians, together with their sympathizers, to Saudi Arabia to rule. We can do the same thing elsewhere.

Khomeyni stayed in Iraq 14 or 15 years. In view of his age, nature, and special character, on top of the special nature of the people of his homeland, he was an introvert during his stay in Iraq. He could only come in touch with a bad environment in Iraq and could not see the good Iraq. This led him to believe that all the Shi'ites of Iraq sympathized with him and, consequently, that he could sweep Iraq. He thought if he managed to sweep and occupy Iraq—with the moral effect this would have, in addition to Iraq's resources—it would be easier for him to hit and destroy any wall in the Arab homeland.

On the basis of this theory, he began his aggressive operations inside Iraq along with his aggressive operations on the border.

This analysis has been clear to us from the start. We were neither astonished nor surprised by the appearance of Iranian aggression. Rather, we expected it on the basis of our analysis of events; we expected the shah to fall before it actually happened.

We said the shah would fall. We reached this conclusion early on. We concluded that Khomeyni and a group of Iranian religious men would come to power. We knew that they would have an aggressive orientation. We began to immunize our people against this sabotage phenomenon. The best way to fight that type of thing is by immunizing your people. Had we not been frank with our people, the Iranians could have beaten us. I told the Iranians, in front of our people and on radio and television, that we are a people of Sunnis, Shi'ites, Kurds, Arabs, Christians, and Muslims. There is no shame in that. The shame is to turn this trait against the homeland at the expense of the people's integrity and the creation of a new history for this country. By a new history I do not mean one that contradicts our past, but a better state than the one we have today.

I also told you that the Iraqis are ready to face this situation. Some people would tell you that the president is from 'Awja in Tikrit. I tell you that any president must be from somewhere. He may be from Tikrit, Mosul, Karabala', or Al-Najaf. He may be from a village in one of those regions. It could be 'Awja, Al-Mishakhab, or some other village. You will continue to hear that tune. I am from the village of 'Awja. My kinfolk are known and they are from an area called Tikrit, which was administered by the Baghdad Governorate. Now, along with its surroundings, Tikrit is a governorate by itself. There is no shame in that. The shame is not to bear one's responsibilities—that is, the responsibilities of one's positions.

So from now on, do not judge people by saying that the president belongs to a certain place—Al-Hillah, Tikrit, Samarra' or somewhere else. Let us say a certain person is a director general. Then, we ask: Does he have the qualifications to hold such a job? We are ready to talk about something like that. We told them Khomeyni will be hostile and said the cause of his hostility is his perspective. We explained this perspective in the clearest possible terms. We told them he wants to use religion to establish a Persian empire. We also told them of his claim that Iraqi Shi'ites should pledge allegiance to him rather than to the Iraqi people. Thus, he seeks to use them to achieve his ends. Khomeyni says the same things about you.

One day we said if Khomeyni is honest, he should hold free elections. If I were a candidate in Iraq and the Shi'ites were the only eligible voters, I would win the people's trust more than Khomeyni would if he were to nominate himself in elections across Iran in which all Iranians would take part. If a committee were to be formed to study the percentages which he and I won, I would be declared the victor. We tackled the issue directly with our people without any hesitation.

Afterward, the slogan "Not only one third and not only two thirds of the people support Suddam Husayn. All the people pledge their allegiance to Saddam Husayn." This slogan was repeated by the people themselves. Then, the people took to the streets. Hence, that day was called the Day of Allegiance, which you sometimes hear of. This is Khomeyni's history. And because we are not distant from our people, we tell them about our accomplishments and our mistakes. When we make mistakes, we tell the people that we did so, and we tell them what the circumstances of those mistakes were. Our enemy does a great deal of thinking. We tell the people the truth about the circumstances of this battle and the coming one.

Khomeyni is determined to continue the war because he has no choice now that he has chosen to fight Iraq, which to him represents all Arabs. He has chosen to crush Iraq to achieve this dream. If he fails to make this evil dream come true, that will be the end of him. That is undeniable. You may not write this and we may not write this. However, this is the only end result of Khomeyni's

failure to export his "revolution." And when all of his attempts fail and they are doomed to failure, God willing, his expansionist doctrines and policies will be defeated and his charlatanism will be exposed and lose strength.

We want to talk about the Shi'ite theory. And let us put that in quotes in reference to Iran, as the Iranian concept of Shi'ite doctrine has always been alien to the Arab mentality. However, regrettably, many Persian rituals and concepts have found fertile ground among Arab and non-Arab Shi'ites—something that would undermine pan-Arab security. This problem can be solved through a demonstration of awareness and by conducting frank and open dialogues. It cannot be settled with cover-ups. Regarding this, we have to be frank and honest within a context that strengthens the people's unity and perspective. I do not believe that anyone is hurt by this honesty. If we were sectarian, they would be harmed.

However, if they are dealt with objectively as sons of one people who are given the chance to choose their own creed on the basis of their own interpretations, they would not be hurt. For us, creed lies in interpreting and explaining those Koranic verses that have not gained a unanimous interpretation. Creed can also mean relating the Koranic verses and Prophet Muhammad's traditions, as well as the legacy of applying them during the orthodox caliphs' era to real life situations. I am referring here to applying religious tenets to real-life situations. These are the creeds and this is a question of interpretation—one that is achievable in religion and other spheres.

If the war ends, Khomeyni's slogan, which claims he is a representative of Muslims, or even Iranian Muslims, would fall. He does not claim to represent a sect. But, as a matter of fact, his perspective is sectarian. And to display further deception, he says: I represent all Muslims and not just one sect, for he knows that many people in the Arab states, even those who belong to the Shi'ite sect, do not want to be guided by a sectarian slogan.

When Khomeyni loses the war, he loses all his aggressive, expansionist, and sectarian ideological background. If the war ends without his having won anything, it means defeat for him. For us, though, if the war ends without our having won anything other than safeguarding Iraq and the principles of the nation, and without having taken Iranian territory or toppled the Khomeyni regime, we will have triumphed. This is because we will have demolished the slogan with which Khomeyni sparked off the war. But if the war ends without Khomeyni winning it, crushing or taking Iraq, and then threatening other Arab countries in the way we have described, he will have lost. In other words, he will have been defeated ideologically, and not just militarily and politically.

Khomeyni knows this only too well—hence his desperate fight. But when will the war end? It will end when Khomeyni's domestic losses outweigh his gains from pursuing it. The war will end when antiwar cries are heard inside Iran and Khomeyni sees that continued hostilities will lose him his key base. So what can hasten an end to the war?

1. Iraq's steadfastness when all attempts founder, and when nothing has been accomplished to whitewash the failure.

2. Serious Arab support for Iraq, with the moral and physical effect this will have on Iraq's steadfastness on one hand, and its role in shaking the foundations of the thinking of the Iranian man in the street on the other. When they realize they are taking on all the Arabs, rather than Iraq alone, they will stop and think about the slogan of pursuing the war.

3. The international stand: We believe that Iraqi resistance, bolstered by multifaceted, verbal, and other forms of Arab support—coupled with Iranian belligerence, which has now been exposed—will bring about a real change in the international position. When the Iranian people realize that Iraq is holding firm and that the Arabs and the world are against Iran, there will be calls to end the war.

There are now real signs that this is happening in Iran. This is Khomeyni's slogan, and these are the circumstances that produced the war. Of course, there are details I do not want to bother you with. How many acts of aggression did Iran commit against Iraq before 22 September 1980? There were 548 armed attacks and 249 violations of our airspace. These included the bombing of oil installations and cities, air raids on Iraqi territory, the closure of Shatt al-'Arab, and strikes on foreign shipping bound for Iraq and Iraqi vessels at Shatt al-'Arab. We have sent Iran and the United Nations 293 protest notes. They responded with one memorandum full of abuse.

They were protest and enlightenment memorandums. I myself wrote some memos and did not seek the help of the Foreign Ministry. I told them you might be imagining that your action is not war. It is actually war, so consult the legal advisers you have in the Interior Ministry. The territories on which you are encroaching are Iraqi, so consult the legal advisers you have in the Foreign Ministry. If you do not know that what you are doing against Iraq is war, then I tell you it is war. You might not think it is war, so consult the people because you are new in power. What you are doing is war and war is a serious thing. We went that far in enlightening them.

Nevertheless, we received only one memorandum full of curses. We still have the text of that memo. In it they threatened to crush us and so forth. Before 22 September 1980 their defense minister said: If our Army leaves for Iraq it will stop only in Baghdad. You might have not been acquainted with all these issues. Hamid [not further identified] will give you the memo to use as a document and as a reference for you. Wise men avoid evil, but

when evil falls upon them and approaches their doors, they certainly carry their swords and face it bravely. As for us, our analysis was clear in all this. This is a basic element in our steadfastness, although defending Iraq is not a simple but a great thing. Iraq, with all its past and present, deserves to be defended. All Iranian hostility and its objectives as well as the moral, religious, and even humanitarian pan-Arab responsibility are clear to us. Therefore, you find we have developed a steadfastness whose secret you try to detect in your questions and talks with us.

Journalists: Mr President, can we link what happened in Mecca with what you have said?

The President: Yes, I shall speak about this linkage directly, although earlier I spoke about it before the world and not in closed rooms. You may not notice this because you are not dealing with the Iranian statements and do not need to be acquainted with them as we do.

As Arabs we know that religion first came to Mecca with Prophet Muhammad, may God's peace and blessings be upon him. The prophet then moved to Medina and back to Mecca. What is important is that he was born in Mecca and had the Islamic revelation in Mecca. When we read the Koran we find citations that strengthen one's faith. These citations come from the Arabian Peninsula and not from France, the Congo, or Russia. They all talk about figs, olives, and camels and how they and others were created. Accordingly, where have the cadres who taught us religion in Iraq, Iran, or Pakistan originally come from? They came from the peninsula. Those who knew religion better came from the peninsula. It is true we are 1,400 years ahead of them, but this heritage is inseparable from the present as a source of light for what is correct. Likewise, the understanding of people in any region is inseparable from their heritage.

Let us move on to a basic issue. We know that Muhammad, may God's peace and blessings be upon him, was the first to pray in the Islamic fashion as cited in the holy Koran. Therefore, we must adopt his way of prayer. Likewise, Muhammad, may God's peace and blessings be upon him, was the first to fast in the same manner. Therefore, we must adopt his fasting method. He was also the first to say that Muslims should pray at this and that time and in the well-known manner. He practiced this by himself and with Muslims. Therefore, we should follow his steps. To be correctly guided we should hear from the Arabs, particularly the Peninsula Arabs. Even in Iraq you will find a few citizens who wait approximately 5 minutes after hearing the call for prayer that breaks the Ramadan fasting.

In Iran and elsewhere you will find some who deliberately delay 'Id al-Adha and the blessed 'Id al-Fitr by 1 or 2 days. All this happens under Iranian influence and according to unfounded concepts. If you say to them: Let us agree to end the month of Ramadan on the day you choose so that we break fasting together, they would refuse and insist on time differences. Naturally, as we have said, such phenomena were adopted from the Persians. The Persians seek to turn differences over independent judgments on the diversity of sects into large disagreements connected to the essence of religion and central pillars. From all this we conclude that no foreigner, even if he is religious and good-hearted, can understand the essence of religion as an Arab does.

If we reject the analysis that after the Muslim Arabs had triumphed over the Persian army in the battle of Jalawla' and that later in the battle of Nahawand the Persian grandees had begun to think how they could embrace this religion in order to weaken it from inside, if we put this aside to be safe and to avoid deviation from the correct analysis or to keep from falling into some sort of fanaticism, we would say that religion came to the Arabian Peninsula in Arabic. In order to spread, this religion sought to win the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula, so it converted them into Muslims. Then it organized them into a cadre to spread the mission; it derived all citations as they are in the Koran from the Arabian Peninsula and Arab life and history.

Accordingly, other nations should depend on the Arabs in interpreting religion. If a contradiction appears in this regard, they should seek the help of an Arab opinion, not that of people who do not understand religion. They should turn to Arabs, who are well versed in religion. A Persian cannot understand Islam no matter how well he masters the Arabic language. Language is not only an instrument of communication and understanding; it is much more than that. It is a way of thinking.

Since language is a way of thinking, a Persian who wants to understand Islam must live in an Arab atmosphere and experience its traditions, concepts, and circumstances. He must also keep in touch with Arab history in one way or another. Arab history and heritage are hundreds of thousands of years old. But even if a non-Arab who lives outside the homeland speaks fluent Arabic, he cannot understand the essence of the Islamic religion the way an Arab understands it. This being the case, how can a man such as Khomeyni, who has never delivered a speech in Arabic or spoken in Arabic to anyone, be a representative of Muslims?

Even if he knows Arabic but does not speak it, this means that he deems himself above the Arabic language, which is the language of the Koran, or that he does not speak fluent Arabic, in which case he is not fit to be the lord of Muslims and Arabs. We have a complete conviction, in view of several signs and analyses and the linking of phenomena, that any foreigner who makes himself a religious lord of Arabs would make religion desist from its goal. Accordingly, in my opinion Khomeyni and his group in Iran do not follow the Arab way of adherence to the Shi'ite doctrines. Moreover, if an Arab is allowed to manage this matter apart from the Persian phenomena and practices, then he will always proceed in the right direction.

Hence, Khomeyni and the likes of him do not want the method of personal judgment, which they believe to be a mere sect. They seek to turn this method into a complete religion whose content, concepts, and goals would conflict with the religion brought by the holy Koran and whose policy was implemented by Prophet Muhammad and his companions. According to the Khomeyni viewpoint, once this is achieved there should be differences in one way or another over the origins and branches of all religious affairs. Such differences might reach the level of contradiction and fighting. Thus, differences over the pursuit of religion have included everything and the Muslims no longer have a unified stand on anything except the pursuit and timing of the pilgrimage.

Let us now discuss the events that occurred in Mecca. We have said that Khomeyni calls for a complete religion, which is totally different from that of the Arabs. His practices are based on superstition and charlatanism. To confirm what we are saying, you must remember that in a speech he delivered in 1987, Khomeyni said that 40 days following Prophet Muhammad's death, Gabriel appeared to Fatimah [Prophet Muhammad's daughter]. This was a written speech. Brother Hani [the president's press secretary] will give you a copy of the speech if you are not acquainted with it. How could this be uttered? The Arab mentality cannot accept such utterances. However, the deteriorating circumstances the Arabs have experienced, including the ruling of Arabs by foreigners, the lengthy absence of an Arab national state, and the continued existence of a Persian state, along with other factors, have enabled the Persians to play a subversive role toward Islamic Arab thought.

Others have played a similar role under different circumstances, although it was a less dangerous and less effective one.

Journalists: Why did Gabriel appear to a woman and did not select a man?

The President: The matter goes beyond the example we have given. This example says that the theory in which some Persians believe is based on the assumption that Gabriel betrayed the trust and gave the message to Prophet Muhammad instead of to 'Ali. That is why we see some Persians strike the ground with their hands during prayers and say: The trustworthy one betrayed the trust. They repeat this three times, referring to what we have mentioned above.

In any case, these kinds of deviationists and those who forge history sometimes avoid holding such a discussion with the Arabs, particularly with those Arabs who are wise. However, they do not hesitate in misleading non-Arabs and even foolish Arab circles with their trail of history 1,400 years later when they claim that the transfer of the caliphate to Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthman was an act of forgery and that matters should have proceeded in a different chronology. By claiming this, they do not want to support 'Ali ibn Abu Talib or to wish that he had been the first caliph. All they want is to tarnish the Arabs and their history, deprive the Arabs of their glorious heritage, and dismiss an era replete with prestigious Islamic practices in all walks of life. They want to replace them with new concepts and practices that will form the substance of the new religion they claim to be Islam.

They also want emancipation from Islamic history and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad that were communicated to future generations by the Abbasid caliphs and the prophet's followers. From this premise, we have every right to say that Khomeyni and his like have taken Islam and the call for supporting 'Ali ibn Abu Talib as an excuse to reject Arab history during that time and the brilliant Abbasid era. By doing this, they deprive the Arab individual of his glorious past. When this Arab history is canceled and the Arab individual is asked to profane this era and disavow it in the religious rituals he performs, the Arab individual finds himself without any heritage. They want to deprive the Arabs of their historical background in order to make it easier for them to carry out the new concepts they have in mind. The only stage they could not forge was that of Mecca. They remained committed to the rules that religious rituals in Mecca must begin on this date and end on this date and at this hour on that day.

They raised the slogan that not only conventional religious rituals should be performed in Mecca. They said that other rituals should also be performed there. Thus, you will go to Mecca to perform the rituals you have inherited from Prophet Muhammad while they add a new ritual every day and every year to the conventional ones that are performed at Mecca and Medina. This will create confusion later as to what rituals should be performed there. This will also put before us many interpretations of Islam and a new religion will emerge, as is the case for Christians in the world who now have different interpretations of the Bible. As a result of this behavior and the deviationist concepts, we will find ourselves having different religions and not only one.

Have their vile actions in Mecca finally exposed their conspiracy? The answer is no. Next year you will find that they will carry out other vile activities to achieve what they have failed to achieve thus far. They want to establish different religious rites so that when Muslims go to Mecca they perform different rites and rituals. In the end, the rituals and rites will be quite different from what Prophet Muhammad had established. Thus, Khomeyni will have created a new religion that will greatly differ from that practiced by the Muslim Arabs.

Therefore, their slogan that Muslims should take over Mecca and turn it into a place like the Vatican is only an Iranian slogan meant to attain a Zionist slogan, in addition to what has been said. This is so because when Mecca, which is situated in an Arab territory, is turned into a place like the Vatican, the question of why Jerusalem is not also detached from Palestine and take

another form will be asked. They will easily ask you why the Arabs want Jerusalem under their sovereignty and why it doesn't become like Mecca if, God forbid, Khomeyni's slogan succeeds.

Khomeyni's slogan of internationalizing Mecca falls within the framework of the goals that are hostile and harmful to the Arab nation, as well as the framework of facilitating the task of applying the same slogan to Jerusalem by completely isolating it from Arab sovereignty. When Jerusalem is isolated from Arab sovereignty and from the Palestine question, the Palestine question will not have the same roots and the same moral, spiritual, and historical depth in the hearts of Muslims and Arabs in general.

Journalists: In light of Your Excellency's talk about the historical sequence of Iranian or Persian ambitions, and in light of the explanation of examples of the Turkish, the Ottoman, or other rules without getting into the minor details of this serious plan, what is the reply or alternative President Saddam Husayn deems fit to confront this danger which is threatening the Arab nation?

The President: By exposing it, by being frank with the people, and by firmly standing against it. There should be no lenience or bargaining because the slogan is serious and those in charge of implementing it are serious. They [the Iranians] might maneuver as they tried to reach the Syrians and Libyans. However, this will result in committing a mistake deep inside [the Arab homeland]. If they destroy the frontline and reach Syria, then it will be a piece of cake for them. They will evade any commitment. And when they arrive in the Arab Maghreb, the alliance with Al-Qadhdhafi will end. You notice now that they are making an attempt with the GCC. They want members of this Council to depart from their united position. Attempts are now being made to fragment the GCC position so that they can deal with each country separately. If Iraq is destroyed, God forbid, they would not resort to such methods of fragmentation; they would have started the invasion. You know that some Arab countries cannot remain steadfast like Iraq for many reasons. Therefore, the answer to your question on how to confront this scheme is that we should face it by discussing it frankly with our people, mobilizing our resources, invoking solidarity, rejecting Iranian maneuvers, and coordinating Arab and international stands. The plot will then be foiled. Two-thirds of the plot has been smashed, but these two-thirds can be restored at any time when, God forbid, they achieve a victory because the souls which lost hope might begin to revive once again.

You know what the collapse of Iraqi defense lines, God forbid, means. I do not mean the military defense lines, but the Iraqi situation as a line of defense for the Arabs as a whole. However, within this framework, I must stress that our conditions in Iraq are excellent, praise be to God. We are now stronger than we were when we waged successful battles last year. Our morale is stronger and our men are greater in number and better armed. There is also a strong faith in all the principles we have mentioned. The simple and educated soldier clearly feels that if the Iranians arrive in Iraq, they will not only destroy it but will also destroy all the Arab sanctities they can reach.

Journalists: Mr President, we would like you to explain to us the current situation on the front.

The President: The current situation on the front is that they and we are massing troops. They are waiting for a chance and we are preparing to foil it. We are stronger than they are and they, praised be God, become weaker with the passage of time. This is briefly the situation. We are fully confident that if all of Iran takes hold of any small part of Iraqi territory, we will destroy it and Iraqi defensive lines will remain invulnerable.

Journalists: You have discussed Iran's position on the international level. The question is how to convey this picture to the Iranians in the streets and to tell them that all reports say that the Iranian rulers have used the uneducated Iranians in their war against Iraq. How can we make Iranians realize this and how can we reach the Iranian mentality?

The President: If we take a look at the animal world, we find that all animals run from danger zones. Some animals attack their prey, but when they discover that their prey is defending itself and hurting them, the animals flee and leave their prey in peace. The instinctive fear of danger exists in all living creatures, even in animals. This being the case, how can it not apply to those who fail to understand things in Iran? Those people must come to realize that they have no hope of being triumphant whatever they may do. They must also realize that the longer the war continues, the more losses in life and resources they will sustain and that these losses will make more and more people in Iran say that the war is futile and must not be prolonged.

A family with five sons begins to think about doing something when it sees two of its sons have been killed in the war. They begin to do something in order not to lose the others. However, others will say that one son was killed in the war with Iraq. This will mean that other sons can be used in war against other Arab countries. This shows that people do not always act on a logical basis. They must be shown that the course on which they are proceeding will not make them attain the objectives they have assigned themselves and that as a result they will be frustrated.

For example, let us take an Iranian farmer. The majority of the farmers in Iran are uneducated. Before the war, the farmer went to the market to find food and clothes for his family. He would find a pump in the market if he needed such a pump for his farm. However, with the prolongation of the war, the farmer finds he cannot find anything in the market. When he realizes this, he will

raise slogans against the war. Therefore, the factors we have already mentioned—that is, Iraq's steadfastness, the Arab countries' solidarity with Iraq, the ever-increasing world solidarity with Iraq, the increasing world opposition to the war, and the weakening of the Iranian economy through Arab coordination and the intensification of Iraqi Air Force raids—are all messages to the people in Iran who are uneducated. As for the Iranian intellectuals, we can address them differently and tell them that the war must end because they will gain nothing from its prolongation.

Journalists: Mr President, you also discussed the importance of enhancing the Arab citizen's feeling that the battle is a sacred Arab battle. How can we carry this out on the level of the intellectual, the ordinary citizen, and the student in the Arab homeland?

The President: This can be achieved by explaining to them the Iranian designs and by substantiating this with facts and figures. We have many facts and figures on the Iranian regime's designs and aggressions. If you want to address the intellectuals, then you must go back to Iranian statements and even research their background. The Iranians provide us with many statements that reveal their hostility toward Arabs. In light of all this, it will not be difficult to convince intellectuals whether they are men of religion or ordinary citizens. I believe that we have sufficiently discussed this subject.

Journalists: Mr President, from your position of responsibility, do you expect an end to the war in the near future?

The President: If the termination of the war is in our hands, we would be able to tell you about future expectations. But its parties are at least two: the Arabs, represented by Iraq, and Iran. For the war to end, the two parties should agree to terminate it. From the beginning Iraq has called for an end to the war while Iran continues to refuse. The Iranians did not say that they agree to end the war. There are other considerations, including the fact that the Zionists believe the continuation of the war serves their interests. They think that Iraq would constitute a serious threat if it gets out of the war in the shape it is now. The Zionists, as you know, are not the only group in the occupied territory, but all the Jews who share with them their aspirations at the expense of the Arabs.

It is my duty and pan-Arab, humanitarian, and constitutional responsibility to be cautious to the last moment as long as the war continues. In the meantime, we must interact with any hope or opportunity for the termination of the war. I believe that we remain on the safe side in this regard. If we continue to think that the war will end after 1 year, 6 months, or 1 month, we will be cutting down the process of moral and practical mobilization to face the dangers of aggression.

Journalists: Mr President, a question that may be the last. It is reported or rumored—and this was published in the Western press—that the war will not be terminated and that only military operations will be suspended.

The President: We do not think that it is in the interest of either the Iraqi and Iranian peoples or the Arab nation or the human trend in the world to have military operations cease without ending the war itself. A lot of blood has already been spilled and things have pushed to dangerous courses which have become a threat to the security of the region and the world. What is required is a final and comprehensive end to the war and that both sides preserve their integral sovereignty and exercise their options according to their interpretations without interference in each other's internal affairs.

Naturally, there are attempts and we know that some quarters are trying to end the military operations without ending the war. Thus, they want the war to continue again at any time in light of international balances and special balances in the region. According to realistic, circumstancial, and long-term calculations, such attempts benefit neither the Iranian peoples nor the Arab nation and the Iraqi people.

Journalists: Mr President, the Amman summit witnessed a meeting between President Saddam Husayn and Hafiz al-Asad. This was followed by efforts exerted by his royal highness the Saudi crown prince within an Arab tour. Mr President, what can be said to Arab readers in light of His Highness Prince 'Abdallah's tour and the meeting between Your Excellency and Hafiz al-Asad?

The President: At the Amman summit, President Hafiz al-Asad and I met in the presence of six other Arabs. So we were eight. We had no separate meetings. Each one of us expressed his viewpoint in front of the eight Arabs. We then met in the official summit in front of all the Arab countries' representatives. Each of us expressed his views and opinions vis-a-vis the agenda topics in front of all the Arabs.

With regard to the Syrian stand on the war, which is the essence of the differences between the Arabs and the Syrians—I do not say that the difference is only between Iraq and the Syrians—you can measure any step made by the Syrians on this issue in light of their statements and behavior. At this stage, I do not comment much on this issue. What do we hope? We hope that any wrongdoer in any Arab state will seriously retreat from his mistake and behave correctly to serve the Arab nation.

With regard to what Brother Saudi Crown Prince 'Abdallah has done, I prefer to address this question to him because he visited Iraq first and clearly acquainted himself with our stand. Then he went to Syria. You can address this question to him: What are the results of your visit to Syria?

Journalists: Mr President, do you believe that the Egyptian president's visit [to the Gulf states] will have any effect on the course of events in the region?

The President: In all cases, good relations among the Arabs and mutual confidence among them is a factor of strength, particularly when the visits among the Arabs are on the basis of this objective. I believe President Husni Mubarak wants the Arabs to be in a better situation. When such visits take place, we always hope that they will make the Arab situation better.

Journalists: Mr President, thank you for your patience and hospitality.

U.S. Commerce Official, Delegation Visit

Received by Salih

JN031537 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1435 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Text] Baghdad, 3 Feb (INA)—Minister of Trade Muhammad Mahdi Salih today met with James Kelly, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of commerce for Africa, the Near East, and South Asia, and his accompanying delegation.

During the meeting, bilateral relations of trade cooperation were reviewed.

James Kelly arrived in Baghdad yesterday on a visit lasting several days.

Meets With Al-Mulla-Huwaysh

JN040956 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0855 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Baghdad, 4 Feb (INA)—Heavy Industries Minister 'Abd al-Tawab al-Mulla-Huwaysh met here today with James Kelly, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of commerce for Africa, the Near East, and South Asia, and his accompanying delegation. During the meeting, they reviewed relations and cooperation between the two countries and ways to promote them.

Received by 'Abd al-Rashid

JN041150 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1055 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Baghdad, 4 Feb (INA)—Iraqi Industry Minister Hatim 'Abd al-Rashid met here today with James Kelly, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of commerce for Africa, the Near East, and South Asia, and his accompanying delegation. During the meeting, they reviewed cooperation between the two countries in the industrial field and ways to promote it.

Ramadan Receives Romanian Deputy Minister

JN301508 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1350 GMT 30 Jan 88

[Text] Baghdad, 30 Jan (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, RCC member and first deputy prime minister, has received a message from the Romanian prime minister, Constantin Dascalescu, on Iraqi-Romanian cooperation and ways to develop it.

Mircea Georgescu, deputy minister of wood industry and construction materials, conveyed the message during a meeting with Ramadan here today. They reviewed bilateral relations in economics, trade, and technology. The participants expressed their satisfaction with the progress of those ties, which are growing in accordance with the interests of both friendly states.

'National Alliance' Marks Hamah Massacre

JN031053 Baghdad Voice of the National Alliance for the Liberation of Syria in Arabic 2050 GMT 2 Feb 88

[Statement by the National Alliance for the Liberation of Syria on the 6th anniversary of the Hamah massacre issued on 1 February]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O sons of our lofty people in Syria; O sons of our glorious Arab nation; O free men everywhere: 2 February 1988 marks the 6th anniversary of the greatest massacre of the age in our history—a massacre by butcher Hafiz al-Asad who slaughtered over 30,000 people, mostly women and children, in the city of Hamah on 2 February 1982. He destroyed the city over its citizens using missiles and tanks. He imposed a full month of siege on it, and allowed his henchmen and those of his brother Rif'at to kill and to steal, to violate the honor of women, and to cut off their hands and steal their jewelry.

On this day every year, we recall the anniversary of those martyrs, and the widows, and orphans who became homeless. On this day every year, we remember God's mosques and churches which were destroyed over the heads of the worshippers by God's enemy in its rancor against our nation, people, high values, and beliefs. On this day every year, we pause, not to shed tears for the martyrs and homeless, but to confirm to our people in general, and to the victims of tyranny and treason in particular—the victims of Hafiz al-Asad, that their blood will not melt away uselessly, and that the fire which is blazing between our ribs will not abate until the traitors and murderers are punished and the land is cleansed of their dirty acts, when the wounds of the victims will heal, the orphans' tears will be wiped away, and martyrs enter paradise. [passage omitted]

[Signed] The General Secretariat of the National Alliance of the Liberation of Syria, 1 February 1988

Iranian Boats Attack Tanker Off Dubayy 5 Feb

JN050820 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0808 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Shipping sources in Abu Dhabi report that a Panamanian oil tanker was attacked by Iranian gunboats off the UAE coast at dawn today.

The 163,000-tonne tanker "Tavistock" was 12 miles east of Dubayy when attacked by Iranian gunboats. There have been no reports about casualties. However, shipping sources say the tanker sustained slight damage.

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities

Communique No 3,009

JN041856 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Communique No 3,009 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 4 February]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our valiant Armed Forces are demonstrating through their heroic actions that they are always capable of smashing the aggressors and defeating all of their foolish, failed attempts. All of the symbols of charlatanism, backwardness, and aggression are continuing to crumble under the devastating strikes by the Iraqi Armed Forces. The sons of this great country and their courageous leader will, God willing, keep the banners of victory aloft. The following are the activities of our units for last night and today:

1. In continuation of the daily heroic effort of our heroic Air Force's strikes at the pillars and means of aggression, and the punishing of the Iranian regime for its insistence on pursuing war and aggression, the gigantic aircraft of our gigantic Air Force carried out the following missions last night and today:

a. At 2105 [1805 GMT] last night, an accurate and effective blow was dealt to a large maritime target near the Iranian coast.

b. At 1230 [0930 GMT] today, our aircraft dealt a devastating blow to an enemy surface-to-air missile battery in the southern sector of the war front.

c. In the meantime, other aircraft launched a series of successful raids against enemy gun emplacements and assembly points of the scoundrels in the southern sector, inflicting large losses. Having executed all of these actions, all of our aircraft returned to base safely and victoriously in God's care and protection.

2. Our units in the I Army Corps northern sector inflicted new losses on enemy personnel, arms, and equipment as follows: 28 scoundrels killed, 2 infantry positions destroyed, 2 vehicles burned and destroyed, 3 tow vehicles-bulldozers [preceding word in English] damaged, and 1 106-mm gun and 2 ammunition dumps destroyed.

3. Three infantry positions and one medium machinegun were destroyed in the I Special Army Corps, the Allahu Akbar Forces.

4. Three enemy personnel were killed, one shovel [preceding word in English] was damaged, and three ammunition dumps were blown up in the III Army Corps sector east of Al-Basrah.

5. In the IV Army Corps sector east of Maysan, seven enemy were killed, and one infantry position, one observation post, one medium machinegun, and one mortar were destroyed.

6. One scoundrel was killed, one infantry position was destroyed, one tank was damaged, and one raft was burned and destroyed in the IV Army Corps sector east of the Tigris.

7. In the VII Army Corps sector, two infantry positions and one heavy machinegun were destroyed, and their crews were killed.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 4 February 1988

Baluchestan Movement Operations

JN042024 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1335 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Paris, 4 Feb (INA)—The opposition Iranian Baluchestan Movement fighters have mounted daring military operations against personnel and installations of the Iranian regime over the past 2 months. They inflicted heavy losses in men and equipment.

The movement's fighters killed or wounded a number of the Khomeyni guards in attacks in the area of Kadarbikul [name as received], the city of Khash, the area lying between Sarvan and Suran, the area of Kilki Khash [name as received], and the area between Saravan and Jalq. This is according to a statement issued by the movement in Paris today. A large amount of military equipment was destroyed, and a good number of military trucks and vehicles were burned, the statement said.

The movement's fighters also carried out attacks last month in the areas of Kuhiri, Marandak, Zankaban, and Nadan, killing or wounding a number of the regime's men, and burning or seizing a number of military cars.

Senior Official Named To Head Moscow Delegation

TA041439 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 4 Feb 88 pp 1,6

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] A senior official will head the consular delegation to be dispatched by Israel to Moscow. It was decided this week in the Foreign Ministry that the head of the delegation will be Arye Levin, head of the Center for Political Research.

The rank of assistant director held by Levin is much higher than the rank held by the head of the Soviet consular delegation in Israel. (The initial feeling in Jerusalem was to make do with an official bearing a parallel rank.)

Officials at the Foreign Ministry attach great importance to the delegation and hope that it will be able to stay in Moscow for a long period. It will be noted that Levin belongs to the Foreign Ministry's most senior echelon and is in charge of political assessments.

The delegation will include, alongside Levin, three diplomats and an administrator, or a secretary. One of the diplomats will come from the Israeli Embassy in the Netherlands.

The consular delegation will leave for Moscow in approximately 1 month, prior to which a list of names will be transmitted to Moscow and entry visas will be issued there. The Israeli delegation will operate out of the Netherlands Embassy which represents Israel's interests in the Soviet Union.

Novik Assesses Soviet Mideast Position, Ties

TA041403 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 4 Feb 88 p 2

[Report by Ken Schachter and Dvora Getzler]

[Text] Tel Aviv—Moscow has come a long way in the past year toward removing obstructions in the path of a Middle East peace conference, and aide to Foreign Minister Peres told a gathering of foreign diplomats last night.

Nimrod Novik, Peres' political adviser, said Soviet envoys had let it be known in Jerusalem that "the decision has been made" to restore full diplomatic relations with Israel within the context of peace negotiations.

Kremlin leaders also have come closer to accepting the principle that a peace conference would not be able to impose or veto a solution, although they still are "not completely resigned to it," he said.

In recent months, he said, diplomatic code words like "authoritative conference" and "plenipotentiary conference," which hint at an imposed solution, have been replaced by the fuzzier "competent conference," he said.

The Soviets' "position today and their position a year ago are miles apart," Novik told diplomats from 32 countries at a forum hosted by the Federation of Chambers of Commerce.

But regardless of the Soviet position, he said, Moscow has "very little leverage over Israel."

Israel's "low gear" progress toward normalizing relations with the Soviet Union focuses on three issues—the renewal of diplomatic ties, the fate of Jewry within the Soviet Union, and the Soviet contribution to the peace process, Peres told the Knesset yesterday at question time.

Answering Citizens Rights Movement MK [Knesset member] Dedi Zucker and other MKs, Peres said that the departure for Moscow of Israel's "diplomatic delegation" represented "a further small step towards the normalization of relations." But progress was still far from satisfactory.

Novik Meets With Mubarak Adviser in Rome

TA051402 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] A spokesman for the Israeli Embassy in Rome reported that Nimrod Novik, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' adviser, met this morning with Mubarak's political adviser, Usamah al-Baz. He said the two exchanged evaluations of the situation in the Middle East in view of the latest developments.

Shamir, Peres Differ on U.S. Envoy's Message

TA041837 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Report by Jack Katzenell]

[Text] With the American initiative barely started, differences have already emerged between the prime minister's office and the Foreign Ministry. They are over what exactly Ambassador Thomas Pickering said yesterday on the latest Jordanian position when he had separate meetings with Shim'on Peres and Yitzhaq Shamir.

Shamir's aides say King Husayn is willing to postpone an international opening until December, when negotiations on the permanent settlement begin. Peres' aides say no, the King wants the international opening in April or May, when the autonomy talks open.

American sources refuse to get involved in the dispute, but one of them told me: The Ambassador certainly did not give a different version to the two Israeli ministers.

Rubinstein Trip 'Unrelated' to U.S. Initiative

TA041343 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 4 Feb 88 pp 1, 2

[Report by Menahem Shalev and Michel Zlotowski]

[Excerpt] The meeting last week between Jordan's King Husayn and U.S. envoy Philip Habib has been described by U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering as "inconclusive," sources in the prime minister's office said last night.

Husayn had not vetoed the American peace plans, but he had not endorsed them either, the sources said, after Pickering had briefed Prime Minister Yihzhaq Shamir and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

Shamir said following the special briefing that the contacts with the Americans would continue.

In Paris, King Husayn said he had received "no message" from Shamir. The question was put to him following rumours that Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein had come to Paris to meet secretly with members of Husayn's entourage.

Speaking after his meeting with French President Francois Mitterrand, Husayn reaffirmed his opposition to a "limited summit" including Jordan, Israel and Egypt. Husayn said the only framework was an international peace conference under the auspices of the UN Security Council.

Other informed sources in Jerusalem also said that Rubinstein's visit to Paris was unrelated to the current American diplomatic initiative. They would only say that the visit involved other issues with which Rubinstein has been dealing for a number of years.

Tensions between the prime ministers' office and the Foreign Ministry worsened yesterday after leaks to the press about the Rubinstein trip and about a letter sent recently by Shamir to Secretary of State Shultz.

Sources in the prime minister's office accused the Foreign Ministry of "national irresponsibility" concerning the leakage of the Rubinstein trip, saying that the foreign minister's aides had revealed the story in order to abort any possible meeting between Rubinstein and Husayn. But sources in the foreign minister's office denied that they had been the source for the story. [passage omitted]

Peres on Autonomy, Talks With PLO, Jordan

TA041638 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister Shim'on Peres says that the fate of the U.S. initiative will be determined within the next 2 months. He says that the Labor Party will support any effort to shake-up the status quo, but if it becomes evident in a few months that Israeli obstinacy has again foiled a peace move, the Labor Party will have to assess the situation.

Our correspondent Razi Barqay reports that in his address in the Labor Party Political Committee, Peres noted that an interim arrangement of autonomy can be considered, but everyone should know that Jordan is demanding that the United States commit itself in advance on the nature of the final arrangement to follow the period of autonomy.

Mr Peres disclosed that the PLO is ready to open direct negotiations with Israel at once, and has even conveyed a message saying that it is willing to take Gaza. The Alignment, however, objects to negotiations with the PLO and believes that the only partner for negotiations is King Husayn.

Shamir Blames Arab World for Gaza Camp Situation

TA041814 Jerusalem Television Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by an unidentified correspondent on 4 February during a tour of Gaza—videorecorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Correspondent] What is your message to the residents of the Gaza Strip?

[Shamir] My message is that they have to live with the State of Israel, and the State of Israel will live with them. We must find a way to live together. But this way will not be found through violence, only through cooperation and goodwill.

[Correspondent] How do you view the problem of refugees in the Gaza Strip? Does the solution have to be political?

[Shamir] I attach great importance to the need to find a solution to the problem of refugee camps, particularly in the Gaza Strip. There is no justification for the continued existence of camps in which people live in such inhuman conditions for such a long time. There is no justification for this. The blame lies mainly with the Arab world which was interested, perhaps still is, in perpetuating these conditions. I think, however, that an international effort must be made to end this situation.

More on Continuing Disturbances in Territories

E. Jerusalem Schools Close

TA051229 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The Jerusalem Municipality has decided that all students in East Jerusalem schools, including those for special education, will be on leave as of tomorrow. The decision was made in the wake of serious disturbances in the schools over the past week.

3 Arrested at Temple Mount

TA051143 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1105 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Report by Moshe Nussbaum]

[Text] Friday prayers on the Temple Mount ended a few minutes ago. The approximately 5,000 worshippers who arrived here today are leaving quietly through the gates, but several dozen youths are assembling near the mosques and are hoisting PLO flags and trying to incite the worshippers. The prayers in the mosques passed without any hitch, except for one incident.

Three Arabs who wanted to enter the Temple Mount through the Majlis gate were stopped about 30 minutes ago. One of them was carrying a PLO flag and a picture of 'Arafat, and another had an IDF uniform in a case he was carrying. The third was carrying a slingshot in his bag. The three were detained and taken for interrogation.

Hundreds of policemen and border policemen are deployed throughout the Temple Mount area, including the surrounding rooftops, and they are under the command of Police Inspector General David Kraus.

Settlers Launch Civilian Patrol

TA041951 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] The residents of Qiryat Arba' met this evening and decided to patrol the part of the road stretching between Qiryat Arba' and Gush 'Ezyon. The patrol will consist of seven vehicles working around the clock beginning tonight. Our settlement affairs correspondent Menahem Hadar reports that the residents' resolution states that the purpose of the patrol is to instill in the heart of every Jew traveling along that section of the road the feeling that he is not alone and has not been forsaken.

The commander of the Central Command told us this evening that the IDF will be the only force to guarantee safety and quiet in Judaea and Samaria.

Curfews in Si'ir, Balatah

TA041713 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] A curfew was imposed on the village of Si'ir in the Hebron district following incidents in which stones were thrown at Israeli vehicles. The windshield of one of the cars was smashed and a passenger sustained slight injuries. Another passenger fired at the stone throwers, wounding one of them.

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that four rioters from the Balatah refugee camp were hurt during the break in the curfew, which was declared to allow the inhabitants to do their shopping. One of them was hurt by border police fire, while the three others were wounded by rubber bullets. The curfew on the camp was reimposed. In Halhul, five rioters were detained.

Stones were thrown at a No 25 bus traveling along the Shu'fat road north of Jerusalem. Three of its passengers were hurt and received medical treatment. Our correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that there were two additional stone throwing incidents at the same bus line today, but no one was hurt.

'Relative Quiet' in W. Bank

TA041701 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Relative quiet prevailed in Judaea and Samaria today. Several incidents and disturbances have been recorded. Our correspondents Zohar Melamed and 'Ofer Bardugo will report on the latest developments.

[Begin Melamed recording] The curfew in Nabulus, which has been in force for the last week, was lifted for 2 hours today to enable the residents to stock up on food. No incidents were recorded in the city during these 2 hours, but disturbances began in the Balatah refugee camp where the curfew had also been lifted. A number of residents set tires on fire and threw stones. An IDF force dispersed them using rubber bullets and tear gas. A youth who had thrown a Molotov cocktail at a border police patrol was slightly wounded from shots fired by the patrol commander. Following the incident, a curfew was reimposed on the camp.

Slight disturbances also occurred in the village of Halhul and in the vicinity of Hebron. All schools in Judaea and Samaria were closed today, after recent attempts to open them failed due to riots which occurred in most schools. The Civilian Administration therefore decided yesterday to close down all schools for an indefinite period. [end recording]

Settler Wounded in 'Mob' Attack

TA050546 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Four people were hurt in incidents yesterday involving attacks on Israeli vehicles. In one of these incidents, Michel Moskowitz from the settlement of 'Ofra was badly wounded. He underwent surgery at Hadassah 'En Kerem in Jerusalem, and his condition is reported to be stable. Moskowitz was attacked by a mob near the village of Al-Malik as he was driving with several visitors from abroad. One of the passengers was also slightly wounded in the incident.

Si'ir Curfew Lifted 5 Feb

TA050540 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Curfews are in effect this morning at ten locations throughout the territories. Last night Jewish residents from Qiryat Arba' and Hebron conducted patrols on the Hebron Gush 'Ezyon road.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 5 February adds: "Representatives of the Samaria settlements last night decided not to patrol the roads and to let the IDF deal with the problem."]

The head of Central Command, Major General 'Amram Mitzna', says the settlers must put their support in the army to provide for their security, but he said he did not object to the security searches.

Among the locations still under curfew is the Balatah refugee camp near Nabulus, following disturbances there yesterday. However, the curfew imposed on the village of Si'ir near Hebron has been lifted.

2 Wounded in Al-'Arrub 5 Feb

TA051428 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Two inhabitants of Al-'Arrub, north of Hebron, were wounded slightly by IDF fire. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that a mob blocked the main road and tried to attack vehicles and soldiers. An IDF force tried to disperse the demonstration with tear gas and rubber bullets, and afterwards the soldiers fired at the demonstrators' feet. Two were wounded, and were transferred for treatment in a Hebron hospital.

Communist Party's Vilner Comments on Uprising

AU301608 East Berlin NEUES DEUTSCHLAND in German 28 Jan 88 p 6

[Interview with Meir Vilner, general secretary of the Communist Party of Israel, by ND correspondent Hans Lebrecht in Tel Aviv; date not given: "The Struggle of the Palestinian People Is in a Qualitatively New Stage"]

[Text] Question: In the West Bank, in East Jerusalem, and in the Gaza Strip the resistance movement has reached an unprecedented scope and intensity. How do you assess the latest developments? What are the long-term reasons and what are the immediate reasons for this?

Answer: What is currently happening in the Palestinian territories that are occupied by Israel is a qualitatively new development compared with everything that happened previously during the more than 20 years of occupation. Today we can speak of a general popular uprising against occupation and suppression, for national liberation and independence by the entire Palestinian people.

The response of the Israeli Government and its occupation forces shows that they have become hysterical and that they are again trying to "solve" the Palestinian question by military means. This will not be possible and has been proven by the fact that the uprising of an entire people—in spite of the many casualties, injuries, the imprisonment of thousands of people, and the barbaric torture many of them are subjected to in the prisons and concentration camps—has already lasted for about 7 weeks without any interruption.

The basic reason for the uprising is seen in the fact that an entire people have been forced for already more than 20 years to live under human conditions of occupation and suppression, and deprived of any legal possibility of political activities. Its human rights are brutally trampled on. All this and the daily humiliations and the economic restrictions could not have failed to cause the general uprising which we are currently experiencing.

What should be mentioned in particular is how the young people among the Palestinians have integrated themselves into this struggle. For quite some time the Israeli Government succumbed to the illusion that over so many years of occupation the people of Palestine would reconcile themselves to their fate.

Now, however, it is impressively demonstrated that just the opposite is the case. As we communists predicted, many people today realize that the people of Palestine will never renounce their national rights and will never reconcile themselves to Israeli occupation. The fact that the young people—students, college pupils, young members of the intelligentsia, and workers—are in the front ranks of the popular uprising, upsets the entire concept of the Israeli Government's policy, which orients itself around 19th-century colonialism.

One of the current reasons, [for the Palestinian uprising] I would like to stress, is the unity in the ranks of the PLO, which has been almost totally reestablished. It has strengthened the Palestinian masses' self-assurance. The Arab summit in Amman also contributed to this. It emphatically stressed the rights of the Palestinian people and again affirmed that the PLO is the only legitimate representative of this people.

In our view, the reduction of international tensions and the successfully concluded summit meeting between Gorbachev and Reagan established a situation which might bring the Middle East problem and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict nearer to a solution. The main disturbing factor is and remains the policy of the Israeli Government. The view that it is necessary to convene an international UN Middle East conference, for instance, is supported by practically all nations and governments in the East and West today.

Even the Socialist International condemns the Israeli Labor Party, which is one of the government's two main components. Bruno Kreisky, vice president of the Socialist International, proposed to expell this party from the organization, since "Defense" Minister Rabin, who holds coresponsibility for escalating the oppressive "iron fist" policy, is one of this party's leaders.

The assertion of government circles that the inhabitants of the occupied territories are acting from despair is absolutely wrong. Desperate people would never fight with such heroism. And without any hope for the victory of their just cause, it would be very difficult to make "desperate" people stage a general uprising.

Question: Obviously the number of those who criticize the government's policy, and who advocate dialogue with the Palestinians and their representative the PLO, is also increasing among Israel's Jewish population. What are the prospects in this respect?

Answer: The Palestinian uprising on the one hand and the barbaric measures of oppression on the other have started a development in two directions within Israeli society. On one side there is an increasing awareness—which is spreading to more and more Jewish circles—that one cannot continue in this way, that the occupation and the government's policy in general will irrevocably lead to a disaster for Israel. Now many people criticize this policy or make demands, which before had come only from us communists.

The press publishes many articles on this subject. The well-known writer S. Yizhar, who is one of the central figures in the Labor Party but also one of the most important people who stir up the national conscience, wrote in the daily DAVAR of 30 December 1987: "We are faced with a people that rebel. One has to be obdurate not to realize this.... Perhaps in our country the mind will finally open to the late but wise insight that two national identities here that are opposing each other, could also negotiate with each other in order to live side by side."

Yehoshafat Harbaki, ex-director of the military intelligence service, in former times was one of the toughest hawks and today advocates realistic positions in public. In an article published by the bourgeois daily HA'ARETZ on 30 December he stresses that the Arab summit in Amman again demonstrated that the Arabs want peace.

I would also like to point out the fact that there are young Israelis, who for reasons of conscience, refuse to serve in the occupied territories and who also say so in public. This applies to a group of more than 60 college graduates who will soon be drafted into military service. And there are 160 reservists, officers, and soldiers, 2 of whom have been sentenced to terms in prison for this reason.

Therefore, we can note that the idea that the occupation of Arab territories can be extended to eternity is increasingly getting weaker in public opinion.

However, one also has to see the other side of the coin, namely a radicalization of the rightist forces. The events are being used by the ultrarightists and by fascist forces to intensify the barbaric measures of oppression. Many—also representatives of the government, such as Deputy "Defense Minister" Micha'el Deqel or Minister Yosef Shapira—are calling for a policy of "transfer," that is, once again mass expulsions of the Palestinian people from their homeland. It is regrettable that in the camp of the Labor Party, too, voices have risen belonging to certain leading members who threaten that, if the Palestinian inhabitants do not reconcile themselves with the occupation and "continue to stir up trouble," they have to expect a tragedy like the one in 1948.

At the same time, fascist phenomena are increasing, such as attacks on Arabs and progressive Jewish peace forces in Israel, or the latest excesses against an event in the Tel Aviv State Theater, where the "Jerusalem Syndrome" drama of the well-known playwright Yehoshu'a Sobel was put on stage, which pillories the brutal terror exercised by the occupation forces. But, on the other hand, a large group of people are against these fascist practices and against the intentions of "transfer."

Question: In light of the latest development, how do you assess the chances for an international Middle East peace conference under UN auspices and with equal participation by Israel, the PLO, and all other parties involved?

Answer: The events in the occupied territories, both the uprising and the attempt to suppress it by force, are one of the factors that contribute to accelerating the process toward an international peace conference convened by the United Nations. Now even governments of capitalist states, except the still reticent United States, support this conference. The Israeli Government, however, continues to reject it outright. But there are slightly different views.

Likud head of government Shamir does not want to hear of it at all. His deputy, Foreign Minister Peres of the Labor Party, on the other hand, acts as if he were for it, but under preconditions that actually equal a rejection of an international conference. Instead he advocates an international gala opening event, which is to serve as an international "shield" for direct negotiations with Jordan, without the PLO. He is also against total withdrawal from the occupied territories. In short, he poses conditions that are totally unacceptable to the Arab side.

But this does not exclude preparations, such as an international preparatory conference. The struggle of a strengthened peace camp in Israel, the struggle of the Palestinian masses, and worldwide energetic support for the just cause of the Palestinian people are able to force Israel to change its attitude toward an international peace conference.

It should, however, be clear that the overall support by the U.S. Administration makes it possible for the Israeli Government to continue its obdurate policy. Although in the Security Council the U.S. UN representative voted against Israel's steps to expell Palestinians, it is a fact that in mid-December—just in the days when the terror exercised by the occupation forces escalated—a new agreement on strategic and military "concord" and on even closer cooperation between the United States and Israel was signed in Washington.

Question: In conclusion, a few words on the Communist Party of Israel [CPI]. How does it use its opportunities within the Parliament and outside of it? What are the political focal points of its work?

Answer: Since the first day of the popular uprising and the intensified oppression by the occupation forces, the CPI and its partners in the democratic Hadash front have organized mass demonstrations in Tel Aviv, Nazareth, and other cities in the country, uncounted memorial vigils in front of government buildings, in particular in front of the "Defense" Ministry and the seat of the head of government, and collections of signatures.

The Knesset groups of the Chadash Front brought a motion of no confidence against the government. The group of the front in the executive committee of the Histadrut and its chairman, CPI Politburo member Benjamin Gonen, demanded trade union actions against the occupation terror and expressions of solidarity with the Arab working people.

The party and the front have already organized numerous solidarity visits of Israeli citizens to Palestinian people plagued by the occupation army in towns and refugee camps in the occupied territories.

In line with a decision of the CPI Central Committee, the CPI and its front partners decisively participated in the initiative and organization of the "Peace Day," the 1-day general strike of the Arab population in Israel on 21 December 1987.

King Husayn: Habib Conveys No U.S. Initiative
NC041257 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] King Husayn of Jordan has stated that U.S. envoy Philip Habib has not informed him of any U.S. initiative.

In an interview in Paris with the AL-NAHAR newspaper, King Husayn expressed his country's support for the convening of an international conference for peace in the Middle East, with the participation of the five permanent UN Security Council members and all the parties to the conflict, including the PLO. King Husayn said he found it deeply painful that the United States had vetoed the UN Security Council resolution condemning Israeli practices in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Columnist Urges Firm Arab Stand Toward U.S.
JN031156 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 3 Feb 88 pp 1, 20

["Everyday" column by Tariq Masarwah: "We Are Afraid of Our Victory"]

[Text] The Arab moderates' wager on a new role by the United States is not much different from the Arab extremists' wager on a Soviet role that measures things in their own way. The Arab wagerer himself is incapable of dealing with the United States or the Soviet Union in a feasible manner.

The Palestinian people's uprising, which has moved the world conscience and which could have been actively and effectivly employed had it not been for the lack of size and weight of Arab action, did not prevent the United States from using its veto at the UN Security Council to foil a resolution dealing with the Palestinian people's basic rights, identity, and natural right to their land.

If the Arab action had size and weight, the United States would not have defied the international will, nor would it have dared to send someone like Philip Habib, under the pretext of activating the peace process, to perpetuate the U.S. farce which has held Arab action in check throughout the past 20 years and since Resolution 242, which the U.S. President pledged in writing to implement within 6 months.

The Soviet Union, Western Europe, and all world blocs are now pressing for an international conference to implement Resolution 242, but they are frustrated by the U.S. stand and by the fact that Arab action is inactive and incapable of taking a firm stand toward the United States and its tail, Israel. We do not know why an Arab summit is not held now to discuss the only topic on its agenda: Arab-American relations. The main seats at this conference should be occupied by the Arab defense, finance, economy, and oil ministers. It is inadmissible for this Arab world, which extends from the farthest point in Africa to the farthest point in Asia, to have less effect than even the kidnapping of 10 Americans in Beirut.

We must have the courage, even just once, to tread on the American foot and have the American people hear their Administration's shouts of pain. We, as Arabs, are a major market for them as well as storing money in the United States; we occupy a strategic position. The Tehran students toppled a U.S. president, and 10 gunmen in Beirut humiliated another to the extent that a book on religion, a plate of candy, and a revolver were sent to the Iranians. Why should we be less than them? Who said that the U.S., USSR, or West European interests in Iran are greater than their interests in the Arab homeland?

The Palestinian people's uprising was very influential in the international political scene and has given Arabs great hope. Therefore, why do we not try to understand this uprising? Why does Arab action not rise to its level?

The time is now suitable to hold an Arab summit and adopt a serious stand toward the United States. By all calculations, a serious stand toward this hostile power will not change the Gulf war equation, but will give the Arabs greater respect and impact. Likewise, it will not change the equation of Arab-Zionist forces nor lead to a worse situation in Lebanon. Fear of the United States is an illusion like the illusion of its power and influence in the region and like the illusion of Arab differences, which are being fed by the United States after it had created them through its agents and advocates.

Let the Arabs, even if just once, adopt a stand of confrontation, because it seems that we are afraid of our victory.

Al-Fayiz Returns From Arab Parliament Meeting
JN012046 Amman Television Service in English 2000 GMT 1 Feb 88

[Text] Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament 'Akif al-Fayiz returned home this evening after he took part in the 18th session of the Arab Parliamentary Union—APU—in Tunis. Mr al-Fayiz told the Jordan News Agency that he met in Tunis with President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Arab parliamentaries for talks on activating Arab parliamentary action in the service of pan-Arab issues. He said he handed over the APU Presidency to Tunisian Parliamentary Speaker Rachid Sfar.

Mr al-Fayiz said that APU session was characterized by unanimity regarding the issues discussed, adding that several decisions were adopted, including extending support for the Palestinian uprising in the occupied Arab territories. He said Arab parliamentarians had appealed to their governments to provide material, moral, and political support to ensure that the uprising achieved its objective of ending the occupation.

Joint-PLO Talks Focus on Cooperation, Action

JN031645 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic
1 Feb 88 p 21

[By Rakan al-Majali]

[Text] Amman—Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu Mazin, PLO Executive Committee member and Fatah Central Council member, and 'Abdallah Hurani, PLO Executive Committee member, left Amman yesterday. Mahmud 'Abbas chaired the PLO delegation to the talks which were held in Amman with a ranking Jordanian delegation headed by Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i. These talks were the longest and the most important held since the suspension of the dialogue between Jordan and the PLO in February 1986.

These talks resulted in a single important decision—the continuation of the dialogue on all levels to reach agreement on joint cooperation and action. Jordanian and Palestinian officials have stated that the two sides have not reached an agreement on the form of participation for action in the coming stage.

AL-QABAS has learned that the last working session was devoted to discussing the issue of Palestinian participation in the international peace conference. In this session, Mahmud 'Abbas said that he has come from Cairo and that Egypt and the PLO agree on some points but differ on others. He said that they disagree on the basics. While Cairo supports the PLO's call for the right to self-determination, it also remains committed to the idea of Palestinian participation through a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. 'Abbas added that Cairo believes there is no substitute for the Amman agreement. He stated: However, we differ with it on this evaluation, and call for participating in the international conference on an equal footing with all the other parties that will participate in this conference. Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i then asked him: Does this mean that you want to participate in the international conference with an independent delegation? If this is the case, we in Jordan will be the first to welcome this, but is this possible?

Mahmud 'Abbas replied: We do not cling to an independent delegation; we want a participation on an equal footing and this can be realized through a joint Arab delegation.

Al-Rifa'i replied that the idea of an Arab delegation is no longer a topic for discussion. However, Jordan was the first to welcome and encourage it, but it is impossible to achieve. Mahmud 'Abbas replied: Then we will abide by an independent delegation, although we know that Israel will reject it and will use it as an excuse for not attending the conference. 'Abbas added: We also know that the United States rejects this formula and that Egypt does not support such a formula. Al-Rifa'i asked him: What about the USSR's position? Mahmud 'Abbas said: The information we have and what the Soviets have told us officially and in writing is that they support the idea of an independent Palestinian delegation and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state under the PLO.

Al-Rifa'i told him: If this is what the Soviets told you, then I believe you, but we believe that this is not the real Soviet stand. He added: We held talks with the Soviet leaders for 3 and 1/2 hours. During these talks, the Soviets did not mention the PLO by name. In the speech Gromyko delivered at the dinner banquet, he also did not mention the PLO. In a meeting after the talks, I asked Gromyko why he did not mention the PLO. He replied in a general manner which we understood to mean that his nonmention of the PLO was intentional. Al-Rifa'i added: During the talks, I also asked a specific question about whether there is any possibility of convening an international conference in which the PLO will participate with an independent delegation. Their answer was that this is impossible. What we are telling you here is not a secret but is recorded in the minutes of our talks.

Mahmud 'Abbas replied that he does not doubt what the prime minister has stated. He added: However, what the PLO hears from the USSR is completely different. Al-Rifa'i then told him: Compare what I have told you with what you are being told and get a clear picture of the stand of the USSR and others.

Mahmud 'Abbas said that he is certain that the information Jordan has is correct and true, but that since the international conference has not been convened, the need exists to work for changing stands so that the PLO may be allowed to participate on an equal footing with all parties. He added: We ask Jordan to support us in this endeavor.

Al-Rifa'i said that he knows in advance that any convocation of the international conference and any participation in this conference should be on the basis of Resolution 242.

The Palestinian delegation affirmed that the PLO is eager to participate in the international conference, but that Resolution 242 is not sacrosanct and can be amended, saying that a provision on the right to self-determination should be added to it. The Palestinian delegation is of the opinion that the popular uprising and the international atmosphere may help to achieve this. What is important is that an Arab effort should be made through the seven-member committee formed to follow up the uprising and support it on the international level to seek an amendment to Resolution 242. The Palestinian delegation also believes that any Palestinian-Jordanian agreement should proceed from the premise of making efforts to obtain an amendment to Resolution 242. The Jordanian reply was that Jordan is ready to resume the dialogue from its present level and not from scratch, and that Jordan's acceptance of Resolution 242 and its conviction that it is not possible to amend it is

something which Jordan and the Arab countries accept. Jordan hopes that this resolution can be amended, but feels one should deal with facts as they are.

Minister Denies Detaining PFLP Demonstrators

PM041149 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 27 Jan 88 p 1

[Nasr al-Majali report: "Jordanian Interior Minister Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Yes, We Detained 23 But Not Because of Demonstrations"]

[Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Jordanian Interior Minister Raja'i al-Dajani has denied that demonstrations were staged in Jordan or that a number of people belonging to the PFLP, which is led by Dr George Habash and based in Damascus, were detained. Yet when called by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT from London at his office in the Interior Ministry in Amman, the minister admitted that there are 23 detainees belonging to the front in question.

He said that they were detained over a month ago, not a few days ago. The PFLP had said that the arrests took place after demonstrations in Palestinian camps and Jordanian universities in support of the popular uprising in the occupied territories.

AFP had reported from Amman that the Jordanian minister "told it" that 23 people had been detained on the charge of stirring up trouble in the country.

The agency quoted him as saying: "The accused received instructions from the PFLP to exploit the uprising in the occupied Arab territories and organize demonstrations in Jordan in order to undermine stability in the country on the pretext of supporting the Palestinians."

After stressing that the 23 detainees were instructed to create "diversionary" operations, Al-Dajani accused the PFLP of carrying out Israeli policy, since the Jewish state, he said, also wants to divert attention from the situation in the occupied territories. This was according to reports by AFP.

The PFLP had said that statements were distributed in Damascus 22 and 23 January indicating that 50 of its members had been detained in addition to another 30. The front had previously talked about "forms of support in a number of Palestinian camps and Jordanian universities."

The minister refuted this information, describing it as "false." He said: "Apart from the 23 people belonging to the PFLP, no detention operations have taken place, nor have any demonstrations been staged in the streets."

Asked about the remarks attributed to him by AFP, Al-Dajani said: I did not state any such thing. All that happened was that the agency asked a specific question about earlier detainees; my reply was that we have detainees, but not because of demonstrations.

In his statements to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Al-Dajani cautioned the press and the media against falling into the Zionist trap, which is trying to erase the facts by assuming and fabricating lies.

Regarding the 23 detainees and whether they will be tried, he said that they are under precautionary detention. He did not elaborate any further.

West Bank, Gaza Students Granted Financial Aid

JN021757 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 2 Feb 88

[Text] Amman—On royal directions, the Board of Directors of the Islamic Alms Tax Fund, which belongs to the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Holy Places, and Religious Trusts, has decided to grant monthly allocations to support West Bank and Gaza university students studying in Jordanian universities because they have not received financial support from their families as a result of the occupation circumstances under which our kinfolk are living; namely, the heroic uprising against the abhorrent Israeli occupation. The fund has started taking the necessary measures to distribute these allocations in coordination with the Jordanian universities.

Terry Waite Reportedly Killed by Kidnappers

NC051225 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1220 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] According to information received from highly placed sources, Anglican Church envoy Terry Waite has met his doom at the hands of his kidnappers. The same report says that the kidnappers had obtained the information they wanted from Waite and then killed him some time later.

Two UNRWA Workers Kidnapped in Sidon

LD050940 Kuwait KUNA in English 0926 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Beirut, Feb 5 (KUNA)—Unidentified gunmen Friday kidnapped two foreigners working with the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in the southern Lebanese provincial capital city of Sidon, KUNA learnt from reliable sources.

The nationality of the two kidnapped UNRWA employees was, however, not immediately known.

KUWAIT NEWS AGENCY correspondent in south Lebanon quoted Lebanese security sources as saying the number of gunmen was not immediately known neither was the motive behind the kidnap.

Sidon is largely dominated by militiamen belonging to the Lebanese Nasirite Movement headed by Mustafa Sa'd.

Swede, Norwegian Identified

NC051000 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Two foreigners, a Swede named Jan Stening and a Norwegian named William Jorgensen, were kidnapped at the Sayniq Bridge south of Sidon today.

According to available information, the kidnappers, who were riding in a yellow Mercedes 200, intercepted the Renault car carrying the two UNRWA employees and took them to an unknown destination.

UNRWA Confirms Reports

JN051012 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1000 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] UNRWA has announced that two of its non-Lebanese employees were kidnapped in Sidon today.

An UNRWA spokesman in Beirut said he has no additional information on the abduction of the two employees. However, according to the Lebanese police the two kidnapped employees are a Swede, Jan Stening, and a Norwegian named William Jorgensen.

No Developments in Schray Case; Kan'an Departs

NC050705 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] With the expiration yesterday of the ultimatum addressed by the Syrian Military Command in West Beirut to the kidnappers of FRG citizen Ralph Schray, the question of Schray's fate is still unanswered and no new developments in the case have surfaced. Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an [chief of Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon] left for Damascus yesterday after a week of talks in Beirut to arrange for the release of Schray.

In another development, Lebanese mediator Rashid Mahrum has denied reports of his alleged involvement in the abduction of FRG citizens Cordes and Schmidt. He pointed out that his relationship with the abductors does not go beyond the scope of mediation.

Investigation of 'Assassination' Continues

NC041540 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] The first investigating magistrate of Beirut, George Ghantus, met this morning with Dr Jamil Ni'mah, director general of public security, and reviewed with him the ramifications of the assassination of Frenchman Jacques Merrin. The magistrate then heard the testimonies of senior public security Commissoners Wahib Qiqanu and Jean Mikha'il.

Judicial sources have disclosed that the investigations have determined that Merrin was a third or fourth grade official of the French general intelligence directorate. The sources said that Merrin had not gone to the public security building for a previously arranged appointment and he had not met with any of the public security officials or commissioners. The judicial sources denied that Merrin had carried with him a dossier, but said that he had carried a black valise containing some papers. The sources noted that the way Merrin was killed is similar to the way in which two French military personnel were killed in the Al-Dawrah area last year, in that they were all shot in the head. The sources concluded that the killer was a professional who was watching and following Merrin.

Magistrate Ghantus will resume the investigation of the incident and will hear witnesses' testimonies on 11 February. He may also hear Doctor of Forensics Salim Najm's report again.

Hubayqah Accuses Armenian Army

NC041857 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] The Elie Hubayqah group has accused the Armenian Secret Army of being involved in the murder of Frenchman Jacques Merrin in East Beirut, as well as being involved in the murder of Colonel Goutiere and

two subsequent attacks in which two policemen and an engineer were killed. The Hubayqah group strongly condemned the assassination of Frenchman Jacques Merrin, affirmed that it has no connection with this bloody incident, and admitted that it had been in contact with the slain man until 1985. The group added that Merrin had been investigating the Armenian Secret Army's activities.

Mediator Bitterlin To Leave 'Empty-Handed'

NC041359 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Lucien Bitterlin, head of the French-Arab Friendship Society, today told AFP that he will leave Lebanon empty-handed after 5 days of talks with officials of the Fatah Movement-Revolutionary Council. Bitterlin, who also voiced hope that some progress will be achieved in the future, said that arrangements for the transportation to a third country of the two girls, Virginie and Marie-Laure, have been made, but their mother, Jacqueline Valente, refuses to be separated from them. He added that the Fatah Movement-Revolutionary Council had not specified its demands for Jacqueline's release. He also stated that the Palestinian group involved wants its action to be seen as a warning to European governments concerning Israeli intelligence activities in Europe.

MEA Flight Passengers To Be Questioned

NC041535 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] The Middle East Airlines [MEA] Boeing 707, in the toilet of which an unarmed hand grenade was found, left Beirut International Airport on a flight to the Gulf at 1630 this afternoon. One hundred passengers who were scheduled to leave for Cairo and 45 other passengers who had arrived from Damascus stayed at the airport pending their interrogation.

Security Forces, Syrians Exchange Gunfire

NC042009 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1945 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Elements of the Internal Security Forces and the Syrian occupation forces exchanged gunfire at the 'Ayn al-Muraysah checkpoint near 'Abd al-Nasir statue this evening. The reasons for this exchange, during which Salim Khayrallah and Amal Muhammad Jarush were wounded, are not known.

Syrian Checkpoint Detains Christians

NC042020 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1945 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] According to reports received by our radio, this afternoon the Syrian occupation checkpoint near Al-Madfun detained some Christian citizens, including engineer Michel Dawud from Binn and 'Akkar and Lebanese Army Private Ghazi Salim Habshah from Dayr al-Ahmar.

Explosion Occurs at Pro-Syrian Party Clinic

NC051128 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] An explosion took place in the Al-Mina area of Tripoli at noon today. Security sources noted that an explosive device went off at a clinic belonging to the pro-Syrian Arab Democratic Party. The blast caused property damage in nearby areas. The security authorities could not say if there were any casualties because of a security cordon Syrians imposed on the area by the Syrians.

Leaflets, Hizballah-Syrian Conflict Considered

NC041252 Marj 'Uyun Lebanon Voice of Hope in Arabic 1100 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] The struggle for influence in the southern areas under the control of the militias is intensifying daily, especially now that Hizballah has managed to penetrate deep inside these areas and consolidate its power in some of them by employing either intimidation or enticement to achieve its aims.

This struggle surfaced recently when a new organization calling itself the Arab Brigades for the Liberation of Lebanon distributed thousands of leaflets in areas of Al-Nabatiyah and Tyre and numerous villages in the south, attacking Hizballah and threatening its leaders. Among other things, these leaflets say that the south is experiencing a barbaric, malicious, Khomeyniite onslaught designed to turn it into one of the ayatollah's provinces. God Almighty has no role in these ayatollahs' and their agents' plots, according to the leaflets. The leaflets add that the outlines of the plot are explicit and that it is being concocted in Tehran to see that our dear south is put under the yoke of treacherous, fanatic occupation.

The authors of the leaflets express their regret and sadness that some Lebanese have sold their consciences in return for a handful of dollars, and have undertaken foreign plots that will violently sweep through the south and destroy the independence of all of Lebanon. The leaflets say that Tehran has paid hundreds of millions of dollars to Hizballah in the past 3 years, exploiting bad economic conditions by buying consciences and using violence in the name of religion, which has no connection with them.

The leaflets also refer to the joint action of Hizballah and some pro-'Arafat elements to displace the people of the country and replace them with foreigners. The leaflets warn the stubborn Khomeyniite agents, the treasonous worshipers of the dollar, the Hizballah group led by 'Abbas Musawi and his clique, that their and their kinfolk's lives are in danger unless they halt their treasonous crimes. They also warn the Iranian intruders and 'Arafatists to get out of Lebanon and stop spewing the venom of ignorance and fanaticism here. If not, they will be expelled like rabid dogs.

What is noteworthy about these leaflets, which are addressed to all progressive forces struggling for unity, freedom, and socialism, is that the slogan prefacing them is really that of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party. This has prompted observers to wonder if the Syrian regime is behind this campaign and to question its objective, especially as this is the first time an organization has openly attacked Hizballah and accused Iran of conspiring against Lebanon. Have the Damascus rulers decided to open an indirect battle with Hizballah in the south to compensate for their failure to control Beirut's southern suburb, Hizballah's stronghold?

Clashes in Beirut, Tension East of Sidon

NC042147 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 2045 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] According to security sources, tension prevails on the Maghdushah hills, in 'Ayn al-Hulwah, and in Al-Miyah wa Miyah [eastern Sidon], where clashes involving machineguns have taken place between Amal and Palestinian gunmen.

In another development, security sources reported that tension prevails among pro-'Arafat Palestinian ranks and the Abu Musa [Sa'id Musa Muraghah] loyalists in the Al-Miyah wa Miyah and 'Ayn al-Hulwah camps, following the attempt yesterday to assassinate Taha Ka'wash, an official of the Syrian Al-Sa'iqah Organization, in the Al-Miyah wa Miyah camp.

PLO Spokesman on Clash South of Ramin

NC041825 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] The PLO official spokesman in Lebanon, Mahmud al-Qutub, gave the following statement a short while ago:

In continuation of the policy of escalating armed struggle against the Zionist enemy, and upon orders from the Palestinian National Liberation Movement—Fatah, the martyr Jihad Abu al-Shafar group of the Fatah militia carried out a courageous attack at dawn today. It clashed with enemy soldiers while it was on its way to the Yiftah settlement, south of Ramin. Clashes were still going on as of late this afternoon.

According to Israeli enemy confessions, three Israeli soldiers were killed and a number were wounded [words indistinct].

'Lebanese-Palestinian' Groups Claim Attack

NC041907 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1730 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Lebanese-Palestinian groups in Sidon have released a joint statement affirming that they shelled the settlement of Metulla in northern Israel at dawn today with Katyusha rockets from the security belt area. The statement added that the attack caused casualties and started fires and that Israeli ambulances rushed to the scene of the shelling. This is the first time that a statement has been released bearing the signature of joint Lebanese-Palestinian groups.

Resistance Attacks, Israeli Siege Reported

NC050628 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Two resistance groups attacked an enemy complex in the south with 107-mm rockets early today, scoring direct hits.

Meanwhile, resistance fighters detonated an explosive device as an Israeli patrol was passing on the Kafr Huna Road 2 days ago. They also bombarded three agent positions at the Burghuz-Al-Ahmadiyah-Western al-Biqa' intersection, as a result of which four agents were wounded and three vehicles were put out of commission.

In another development, the Israeli occupation forces continued their siege of the town of Al-Qantarah for the 3d consecutive day, preventing its inhabitants from leaving. The inhabitants who have been prevented from entering the town are called upon to stage a sit-in at the mosques in the Al-Nabatiyah area and bring pressure to bear on the International Red Cross to lift the siege.

Israeli Planes 'Flying Intensively' Over South

NC050829 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0815 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Israeli warplanes broke the sound barrier over Lebanon during reconnaissance flights at 1010 today. Israeli planes have also been flying intensively over the south.

These Israeli sorties come in the wake of the Palestinian infiltration operation across the Lebanese-Israeli border.

Mock Raid Over Sidon, Camps

NC050924 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Israeli warplanes broke the sound barrier over Beirut at 1010 and 1100 respectively during reconnaissance sorties. Meanwhile, Israeli warplanes carried out a mock raid over Sidon and the Palestinian camps at 0945, drawing antiaircraft fire.

Two Israeli MK reconnaissance aircraft, better known as Umm Kamil to the southerners, flew over the central and western sectors at low altitude last night.

British Envoy Denounces Attacks on Israel

NC051053 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] British Ambassador in Beirut John Gray has denounced attacks on Israel across the Lebanese border. Asked whether he expects the Palestinian operation carried out against Israel across the Lebanese border yesterday to lead to an Israeli attack on Lebanon, the British ambassador said: Ask Israel; however, I hope that this will not happen.

Ambassador Gray said that this sort of violence—namely, attack and counterattack—is not in the interest of the Lebanese, Palestinian, or Israeli parties.

The British ambassador made this statement after meeting for 1 hour with Foreign Ministry Secretary General Fu'ad al-Turk today.

U.S. Intentions Merely 'To Block Just Peace'
JN041451 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Our kinfolk's uprising in the occupied territory has aroused the fear and anxiety of all the parties marketing the policy of partial capitulatory settlements and seeking to keep the Arab-Zionist conflict away from the focus of world attention. This was evident in the recent U.S. veto at the UN Security Council, in the Egyptian regime's call for an end to what it termed acts of violence between the Israelis and Palestinians, and in the renewed attempts to divert attention from the occupied homeland's uprising, which is the crux of the Arab-Zionist conflict. Anxiety and fear of the kinfolk's uprising were also evident in the Zionist entity's barbaric methods against our people and in the Israeli proposals to implement the second part of the Camp David accords on self-rule in the occupied areas.

All these parties have realized that the occupied homeland's uprising and the large pan-Arab and world support for it have strongly slammed the door in the face of the conspiratorial attempts to obliterate and liquidate the Palestine question. The uprising erupted like a volcano and foiled the programs of those tampering with or plotting against the Palestine question, as well as those who had hastened to talk about settlement plans, although they had announced earlier that the Middle East question would be frozen until after the U.S. presidential elections.

The popular struggle for liberation has preceded hostile expectations. Hence, things in the region went in a direction completely opposite to that of the Camp David partners and allies, something that has worried and frightened these parties. The uprising is raging with the aim of accomplishing the task of liberation by incessantly resisting the occupiers in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights, and southern Lebanon. This fact emphasizes that the issue of liberation will continue to remain a hot one, that the Arab-Zionist conflict will stay in the forefront, and that the decision to maintain a strategic parity with the enemy is proceeding toward its set target.

Consequently, the hostile forces have acted through Zionist repression and barbarism, through presenting the capitulatory Camp David accords in a new garb, and through obstructing the role of the United Nations. This deliberate obstruction of the international efforts being made to hold a UN-sponsored international peace conference is a desperate, feverish attempt to block a just peace and the struggle for liberation. These are the U.S. Administration's real intentions, because the U.S. envoy used the veto at the Security Council in accordance with a Zionist rather than an American decision. There is no doubt that U.S. envoys' arrivals in or departures from the region—about which there is talk these days—is no more than a propagandist move and an attempt to dampen the situation as long as this or that U.S. envoy is carrying nothing but Israeli ideas and proposals. As long as the U.S. Administration is following the rule of nothing for the Arabs and everything for the Israelis, the uprising will continue and the struggle will escalate further and further until the land is liberated, occupation is eliminated, and all usurped Arab rights are regained.

Camps Initiative Important Pan-Arab Achievement
JN300852 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 30 Jan 88

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Syria's Initiative Is a Pan-Arab Achievement," the AL-THAWRAH newspaper says: There is an atmosphere of satisfaction, confidence, and optimism prevailing in the Beirut camps and their environs. The ranks of the national Lebanese and Palestinian forces have been closed to confront the common threat, represented by the Zionist enemy and its agents. These developments constitute an important turning point in deepening cohesion between Syria and the national Lebanese and Palestinian forces. This is also considered an important achievement attained by Syria's intensive and honest efforts in favor of the Arab nation and its central cause, the Palestine question.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The deployment of the Syrian forces in the area of the camps and their environs has restored security and tranquility to everyone—both Lebanese and Palestinian. It has also created a state of general satisfaction, which has overcome the negativeness that forces hostile to the Palestinian and Lebanese people tried to plant, magnify, and exploit in the interest of the Zionist schemes. The Zionist schemes seek to liquidate the Palestinian issue and to devour a portion of the Lebanese territory in the south.

AL-THAWRAH says: Thus emerges the extraordinary importance of the pan-Arab achievement attained by Syria in closing the camps' file, achieving peace and alliance among the sons of the national Lebanese and Palestinian forces, and uniting efforts and arms to confront the Zionist enemy. Therefore, the capitulatory Zionist scheme has been obstructed and nipped in the bud; the bridges of confidence have been extended and strengthened between the national Lebanese and Palestinian forces; and the state of tranquility, calmness, and stability, which was sought by everyone for a long time, has been entrenched. The complete response to Syria's initiative was an expression of the national forces' realization of the importance and necessity of this step. This matter has geared subsequent developments into neutralizing and defeating the challenges. It is natural to see that the positive results of what has been achieved as a result of Syria's initiative and efforts in ending the camps' war and closing its file are refected in the struggle against the Zionist enemy and

escalating the confrontation against its occupation in southern Lebanon, in the West Bank, in Gaza, and in the Palestinian territory occupied in 1948. The unity of national resistance against the Zionist enemy constitutes a basic and decisive factor in making the pan-Arab resistance struggle a success, and in reducing the stages of its militant march toward achieving its objectives of liberating the land and regaining the rights.

Afghanistan

Soviet, Government Casualties in Khowst Battle

BK050627 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0600 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Afghan mujahidin have released casualty figures [for Soviet, Afghan Government troops] incurred in the fighting to reopen the Gardeyz-Khowst highway in Paktia Province. The mujahidin say that 750 Soviet-Kabul troops were killed and 1,500 injured; 111 troops were also captured. The mujahidin add that 4 transport planes, 15 military aircraft, 30 tanks, 10 armored vehicles, and 70 trucks and oil tankers were destroyed. Among those killed were the chief of operations staff, General Imamuddin, and Brigadier General Ari'ef Qandahari of the Kabul regime.

In the fighting, a total of 104 mujahidin were martyred and 128 others injured.

Indian Minister To Meet Zahir Shah in Rome

AU041256 Paris AFP in English 1245 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Rome, Feb 4 (AFP)—India's minister of state for external affairs, Natwar Singh, is to meet the exiled former king of Afghanistan, Zahir Shah, here Friday, an Indian diplomatic source said Thursday.

The aim of Mr. Singh's meeting was not made clear, but diplomatic observers said it could be an effort to obtain the ex-king's agreement to join a future government of national reconciliation in Kabul.

USSR Gas Industry Ministry Delegation Departs

LD040016 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Text] The high-ranking delegation of the USSR Gas Industry Ministry led by Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin, USSR gas industry minister, left for Moscow today. The delegation had been in Kabul on an official and friendly visit.

At Kabul airport the delegation was seen off by Muhammad Eshaq Kawa, mines and industries minister; Pavel Petrovich Mozhayev, USSR ambassador in Kabul; and members of the USSR Embassy in Kabul.

Ministers Approve 16 Soviet Aid Projects

LD040029 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Text] The Standing Committee of the Council of Ministers Executive Committee for Foreign and Domestic Investment Affairs met this morning. The session was chaired by Sayyed 'Amanuddin Amin, first deputy prime minister.

At this session, 14 projects sought by national investors in accordance with the national reconciliation policy, facilities provided by the new Republic of Afghanistan Constitution, and provisions embodied in the law on domestic and foreign investment were approved with 276 million afghanis in capital and 311 million afghanis in capital in the area of foodstuffs, metal and construction work, medicine, pelt treatment, and chemical industries [words indistinct].

The committee also approved 16 projects involving Afghan-Soviet cooperation to produce foodstuffs in the private sector of the Republic of Afghanistan, which will utilize R50 million provided by the friendly USSR.

After the commissioning of these projects, which will be built in the capital and Balkh, Qandahar, Nangarhar, and Parvan Provinces, over 2,300 of our compatriots will have the opportunity to find jobs in production areas.

Aid Received From GDR Friendship Society

LD290449 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 28 Jan 88

[Text] The GDR Solidarity Committee has donated goods including food, medicine, and clothing to the Afghan Peace, Solidarity, and Friendship Organization. Documents regarding this assistance were handed over today to Sayyed 'Amanuddin Amin, first deputy prime minister and head of the Afghanistan-GDR Friendship Society by Kraft Bumbel, GDR ambassador and representative extraordinary to Kabul.

Armed Rebel Groups Surrender in Badghis, Konduz

LD050913 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0418 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Kabul, February 4, BAKHTAR—A 50-member armed group which was engaged in armed activity in Badghis Province joined the process of national reconciliation. Another 17-member armed group which was also engaged in armed activity in Hazrat-e Emam district of Konduz Province also renounced its armed activity availing the policy of national reconciliation.

On behalf of their colleagues, 'Abdul Ghafur and 'Abdul Rahman, the ringleaders of the former opposition groups, pledged to ensure peace in their areas.

An extremist armed group comprised of 10 persons who were going to perpetrate bloodshed in the suburbs of Paktika Province were captured by the border forces. Six terrorists who were out to disrupt peace in Qandahar Province were also captured by the border forces in that province.

A large convoy of arms and ammunition belonging to an extremist group was captured by the Armed Forces in Qarghah'i district in southern Laghman Province. The convoy contained light weapons, ground-to-ground missiles, rocket launchers, mortars, machineguns and anti-personnel mines.

National Reconciliation Successes in Herat

LD050919 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0433 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Kabul, February 4, BAKHTAR—After the declaration of the national reconciliation policy ten thousand and three hundred families consisting of one thousand and eight-hundred people [numbers as received] from outside have returned to their abodes.

A Herat Province National Reconciliation Commission's representative said in an interview in the province that sixty-two opposition armed groups, consisting of four thousand and three hundred people have stopped fighting and joined the national reconciliation policy and two peace councils have been formed during this period.

Similarly, twenty-two schools have been rehabilitated, twelve instructors and two-hundred and ten returnees have been reinstated and three hundred and ten returned pupils have been readmitted to their respective schools.

Also, two-hundred and fifty-six national reconciliation commissions with a membership of two-thousand seven hundred and ninety-six people from different strata, including sixteen heads of armed opposition and over one hundred returnees have been formed in Herat Province.

Bangladesh

Chittagong University To Oust Intruders, Reopen

BK050246 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] The Chittagong University syndicate has decided to reopen all residential halls on the 16th of this month and resume classes on the following day after evicting armed outsiders from the halls by tomorrow. The decision was taken at a meeting of the syndicate yesterday with vice chancellor, Professor Mohammad Ali, in the chair.

The university press release said the armed intruders must quit the campus by tomorrow morning, and if they do not leave by the deadline the syndicate authorized the vice chancellor to evict them from the campus taking help of the law enforcement agencies. The syndicate also decided to take action against some unruly students who attacked the residence of the vice chancellor on Monday last.

Opposition Parties To Continue Movement

BK050240 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] The BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] chief and leader of the seven-party alliance, Begum Khaleda Zia, has urged the people to forge greater unity to achieve democratic rights of the people. Addressing a meeting of the standing committee of the party in Dhaka, she said the current movement will continue till the goal is achieved.

Bangladesh Awami League held an emergency meeting of its Executive Committee in Dhaka yesterday presided over by party chief, Sheikh Hasina. The meeting discussed the present political situation in the country.

India

Police Open Fire on Demonstrating BJP Workers

BK050349 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] In Hyderabad today police had to open fire to control violent BJP [Bhartiya Janata Party] workers who were demonstrating in front of the Doordarshan Kendra [television station]. They were protesting against the screening of the serial "Tamas" [depicting communal violence during the India-Pakistan partition]. Six persons were injured; three of them received bullet injuries.

The BJP demonstrators numbering several hundred entered the Doordarshan Kendra and damaged office equipment, fans, TV sets, and telephones. They removed video tapes and films and made a bonfire of them inside one of the rooms. The police first resorted to a lathi [baton] charge but had to open fire when the situation went out of control. Two BJP MLA's [members of legislative assembly] were arrested along with party workers. The director of the Doordarshan Kendra said that damage to office property, films, and video tapes totaled several lakhs of rupees.

Meanwhile, the home minister, Mr Buta Singh, has described the BJP action as indicative of a fascist mentality. In a statement, the home minister said the BJP has trampled upon all democratic norms and conventions in expressing dissent in this way. Mr Buta Singh hoped that all democratic and secular parties will condemn the BJP action. In a message to the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, Mr Buta Singh said he was sad and shocked to know that the state government has failed to protect the staff and property of the central government. The home minister urged Mr N.T. Rama Rao to take immediate steps to give full protection to central government offices and installations and the staff.

Congress-I Alliance Wins Majority in Tripura

BK041253 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Excerpt] In Tripura, the Congress-I-TUJS [Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti] alliance has secured an absolute majority winning 30 of the 58 results declared so far. One more result is yet to come in. The ruling Left Front has secured 28 seats. One seat has been countermanded following the death of a candidate.

In Meghalaya, no party is in a position to gain an absolute majority. Of the 58 results declared, Congress-I has secured 21, HPU [Hill People's Union] 19, HSPDP [Hill State People's Democratic Party] 5, PDIC [Public Demands Implementation Convention] 2, APHLC [All Party Hill Leaders Conference] 2, and independents 9. [passage omitted]

New Tamil Nadu Governor Appointed 4 Feb

BK041346 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Dr P.C. Alexander has been appointed the governor of Tamil Nadu. He succeeds Mr S.L. Khurana. This was announced by the Rashtraparthi Bhavan [President's House] in New Delhi today. Dr Alexander is presently the Indian high commissioner in London.

Iran

Khamene'i Delivers Friday Prayers Sermon

LD051246 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] On the 5th day of the blessed 10 Days of Dawn, the day marking the Islamic revolution and the people's stand against arrogance, and on the eve of the auspicious anniversary of the birth of the dear daughter of the most blessed prophet, her holiness Fatimah al-Zahra, peace be upon her, the Muslim and revolutionary Iranian ummah today went to Friday prayer venues in their solid ranks. While renewing their pledge to the martyrs of the Islamic revolution, they performed these Muhammadan rituals in the most glorious way in most parts of the country.

The citizens of Tehran gathered at Tehran University and the surrounding thoroughfares and chanted slogans such as "War, war until victory," "Death to America," "Palestine is victorious, Israel is doomed," and "Mecca and Medinah must be liberated. They also performed the Friday prayers under the imamate of Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i.

Today's Friday prayers were attended by foreign guests taking part in the Sixth Islamic Thought Conference and in the international women's congress, as well as by some of the fighters of the 23d Division of the special forces of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and a group of students from Shahid schools. Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i expressed his congratulations and felicitations in his Friday prayers sermons on the auspicious 10 Days of Dawn of the Islamic revolution. Addressing the world's Muslims he said: Our revolution and the great victory of the Iranian nation, and the formation of the Islamic order, are indeed still unknown and unrecognized in our times, particularly within our own country which is the focus of events. I believe that the ringleaders of the world powers appreciate and experience the greatness of the event more than ourselves, for a great event has taken place in Iran.

The chairman of the Supreme Defense Council also referred to the great achievements of the Islamic revolution and stated: One of the most important achievements of the revolution is that a new generation has been created in this country with religion and faith as its basis for living. Global arrogance can do nothing about this development.

The chairman of the Supreme Defense Council referred to the uprising of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and added: We can see today the way in which those people, so harshly treated, stand against cruelty and refuse to back down from their struggle. With our revolution and the formation of the Islamic Republic order, Islam has demonstrated that it can serve as a great military power—a power relying upon human beings, not weaponry.

The president went on: Another of the Islamic revolution's achievement is the emergence of revolutionary institutions from within society. These institutions, which have absorbed a huge force from society, are one of Islam's miracles. They have established roots in society, demonstrating that the Islamic revolution enjoys a high degree of human nourishment and revolutionary fervor.

Lebanon's Shams al-Din Gives Presermon Remarks

LD051434 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] We shall start the news reports for this hour with the remarks made by Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, one of Lebanon's ulema, at today's Friday prayer ceremonies in Tehran as the presermon speaker.

Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din began by expressing greetings on the occasion of the 10 Days of Dawn, the time when the Islamic Republic order, as envisioned by Imam Khomeyni, was established for all the world's Muslims and oppressed. He said: On this great occasion and on the anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution, I congratulate the imam of the ummah and the Islamic leaders and ummah, and particularly the Iranian people and military forces. I ask God to continue to preserve and strengthen the Islamic Republic order. Referring to the success of the Islamic revolution, he said: This republic is the great base of

Islam in the world. The Islamic Republic has been able to carry out its mission based on the "Neither East nor West" slogan. Moreover, all Muslims and deprived people, wherever they may be in the world, are protected by the Islamic Republic.

It is for this very reason that the arrogant powers hatch plots against the Islamic Republic. They have utilized every method possible to isolate the Islamic Republic from political, economic, and military viewpoints. Stressing the need for Muslims to unite in order to destroy these plots, he said: Just as the arrogant forces have united to inflict their forces on Islamic Iran, Muslims should respond with a united voice. Pointing to UN Security Council Resolution 598, he said: At the point when it was proved that the unity of blasphemy cannot achieve victory in the face of the Islamic Republic and that, on the contrary, it was the Islamic Republic that was achieving impressive victories every day, arrogance chose to impose peace on the Iranian nation by means of this resolution. The question is: Why are they thinking of ending the war now? They should have done this when Iraq began its attacks on Islamic Iran.

He then pointed to the bloody Mecca tragedy and described it as another conspiracy against the Islamic Republic's order. He said: Despite much publicity on the part of world arrogance aimed at eliminating the impact of this tragedy, blood is still being shed.

Shaykh Mohammd Mahdi Shams al-Din referred to the issue of Lebanon and, addressing the people of Iran, said: I shall tell you about Lebanon. Just as the heroic and Muslim people of Iran confronted the United States and brought the latter to its knees, we shall also continue this jihad in Lebanon and Afghanistan. We have declared in Lebanon that we do not rely on international organizations but on ourselves and on our Islamic faith which, up to now, has helped us to achieve impressive victories against the Zionist enemy and the superpowers. We shall continue with our struggle until final victory. He added: We must also remember the uprising of the people of Palestine in this holy place. They now realize that political organizations and opportunists will not solve their problems. On the contrary, they have discoverred that they can only continue on their path by means of the principle of Jihad. We, too, in addressing them, emphasize that jihad is the only solution. If they want the occupied territories to be once again returned to the Muslims, they must continue along this path and must pay no heed to political organizations and political solutions.

In another part of his speech Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din addressed the leaders of world arrogance and of the countries of the Persian Gulf, emphasizing that everyone should know that the Islamic Republic and its wise leadership is not alone in confronting the forces of world arrogance. All Muslim forces in the world, which are neither too small in numbers nor too weak, will rush to the assistance of the Islamic Republic all over the world if the need arises. At that point there will be nothing left for the superpowers, not even honor. The gracious leadership of the Islamic Republic and its armed Muslim forces are enough to eliminate the plots hatched by the world arrogance. However, if the need arises, all the world's Muslims will stand alongside the Islamic Republic, confront the arrogant powers, and rid the world's deprived of the evil of these powers.

He addressed Arab governments, notably those of the littoral countries of the Persian Gulf. He stated: You can reach understandings a thousand times better with the leadership of the Islamic Republic and the people of the Islamic Republic than you can with Reagan and his like, or with the United States and its like, because our sovereignty and security has been endangered by the aggressive forces that have come to the Persian Gulf with your permission. The people of Iran will receive you with open arms and it is better for you to cooperate with the Islamic Republic than to embark on conspiracies that make the situation deteriorate. Cooperate with the Islamic Republic so that you may follow the correct path.

Besharati, Sarmadi on Regional Situation

NC041927 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1810 GMT 4Feb 88

["Weekly Political Roundtable" with Voice and Vision of Iran announcer Afshar; 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, first deputy foreign minister; and Morteza Sarmadi, Foreign Ministry spokesman and director general of the Foreign Ministry's Public Relations Office]

[Text] [Afshar] In the name of God, the almighty, the merciful. Greetings, dear compatriots. We are again bringing you our weekly political roundtable discussion. Allow me first to extend my congratulations and those of my colleagues in Network Two's political group to each one of you, dear viewers, during the auspicious 10 Days of Dawn. Our dear guests this week are Mr 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, deputy foreign minister, and Mr Morteza Sarmadi, Foreign Ministry spokesman and director general of the Foreign Ministry's Public Relations Office. If you agree, Mr Besharati, I will start our program by posing a question to you. As you know, the Americans have gradually reduced their forces in the Persian Gulf over the past few weeks. Does this reduction of forces mean that they want to leave the area completely or do they want to continue their presence?

[Besharati] In the name of God, the almighty, the merciful. I, too, congratulate all the dear viewers and our dear people on the auspicious 10 Days of Dawn ceremonies. To answer your question, please allow me to speak briefly about the military strength of U.S. and NATO forces. From this we can ascertain their existing military strength, their objectives, and the reasons for thier present withdrawal.

More than 70 ships of various types including the aircraft carriers "Kitty Hawk," "Nimitz," "Missouri," and the French aircraft carrier "Clemenceau" were in the region. To understand the significance of this, one need only mention, for example, that the 91,000-ton "Nimitz" carries a crew of 6,000, as well as 90 fighter-bombers including a number of E-2, E-3, E-5, E-6, and E-7 planes. The "E" series planes can simultaneously identify between 250 to 600 targets within a 450 km radius. In addition, the E-2 planes are used to jam electronic radar systems. Obviously, these ships and missile-launcher ships, including the "Kitty Hawk," with its 240 different types of missiles, did not come to the region on a fishing expedition. Following the "Karbala'-5" operations and the serious defeats suffered by the Iraqi Ba'thist army, the Americans and supporters of Saddam realized that the Iraqi Ba'thist regime was in its death throes. Consequently, America began to poison the international atmosphere against us. The continuation of this situation led to the approval of Resolution 598.

Simultaneous with this development, there occurred the war of the embassies, the massacre of 450 pilgrims at the holy shrines, and the military presence of the United States and NATO in the region. They came to the region seriously believing that their military intervention could wrap things up and end the Iran-Iraq war. However, their continuing presence and the raging flood of our fighters to the fronts, as well as the people's harmony and unity, created an extraordinary fear in the hearts of the United States and its allies. As a result, they concluded that their continuing presence in the region would reap no benefits. This conclusion was reached as a result of their original intent to do something through their military intervention. Our fighters delivered a crushing answer when they downed the U.S. military helicopter and bombed the "Sea Island" oil platform. This further disgraced the United States, and finally made the United States and NATO realize that they must gradually leave the area to preclude further harm to its prestige. Of course, when we say that the U.S. and NATO forces are leaving the area this does not mean that all of them will go. America has always been in the region, and because of the current situation in the region and the continuation of the crisis created here by Iraq's Ba'thist regime, some of the U.S. forces will remain. Thus, this year's auspicious 10 Days of Dawn will have a special sweetness because we will once again witness the disgraceful defeat of the United States—the most powerful and most serious enemy of the Islamic revolution—and of the other U.S. allies in the region. For this, I congratulate our dear people.

[Afshar] Mr Besharati, following the GCC conference, Syria's foreign minister, Mr Faruq al-Shar', paid visits to Tehran and to Hijaz [Saudi Arabia]. As we heard in news reports quoting officials, his mission was aimed at easing the tension in the region. It was also reported that a conference in which the GCC members and Iran will participate is to convene. In this connection it also was reported that the deputy foreign ministers of these seven countries will meet in Abu Dhabi in the near future to prepare the groundwork for a conference of those countries' foreign ministers. What will Iran's presence at that conference mean, and how will its views be presented?

[Besharati] The exit of U.S. and NATO military forces from the Persian Gulf will return the regional situation to its original state before the arrival of U.S. military forces. The world can now see clearly that to ignore the Islamic Republic of Iran's viewpoint, nothing can be accomplished in the region and security will not be achieved because of our 2,500 km coastline in the south and because we are the most powerful country in the region. How can some claim to be seeking security in the region without taking us—we who have pursued security more assiduously than anyone else—into consideration? Therefore, the GCC members have concluded that in order to achieve security, the Islamic Republic of Iran must be taken into account as much as possible. Hence, the proposal for a conference of the GCC countries and Iran. The deputy foreign minsiters of the seven countries will meet in the UAE soon. This meeting will prepare the agenda of the conference of the seven countries' foreign ministers. After this, the foreign ministers of the seven countries with the most compelling interests in the region will meet to discuss the security of the sensitive Persian Gulf region. We will have achieved a significant and splendid victory with the Americans' exit. As the Holy Koran states: "And they thought that their fortresses would defend them from God! But the (wrath of) God came to them from quarters from which they little expected (it), and cast terror into their hearts."

In other words, the objective of the U.S. presence was a very dangerous one. Fortunately, however, the power and strength of the Islamic Republic of Iran prevented the Americans from doing anything. The United States is much too weak to attempt any moves in the region, even though it came here with vast potentials. They [the regional countries] want security more than anyone else. However, neither the Americans nor the NATO members gave them this security. We all witnessed, and international insurance companies announced, that the number of attacks on ships doubled from the very day the American forces in the region increased. Therefore, what objective did America pursue? What did it gain? What service has it rendered to the regional countries, apart from weakening and disgracing them? They achieved nothing, and America was disgraced. All of this is due to the extraordinary strength of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which has risen up as a great force and confronted the aggressive powers. God willing, we are moving to the point where we will hoist the great banner of "There is only one God".

[Afshar] Mr Sarmadi, regarding the question I put to Mr Besharati: Mr 'Izzat Ibrahim, a member of the Iraqi leadership council, made several visits to Persian Gulf countries. During the past few days, we have witnessed a strong propaganda attack by the Iraqi press against the

Persian Gulf countries because they have undertaken activities seeking a rapprochement with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Meanwhile, we also see that Iraq has intensified its attacks on cargo ships and tankers in the Persian Gulf. In view of all this, there is an assessment that Iraq has commenced a new round of activity in a bid to forestall the process to which our brother, Mr Besharati, has referred, namely, a rapprochement between Iran and the Persian Gulf states. In your opinion, how accurate is this assessment?

[Sarmadi] In the name of God, the almighty, the merciful. Generally speaking, Iraq's policy in the region has been aimed at exacerbating tension and involving other regional countries [in this tension]. If you recall, we declared 4 or 5 years ago that this is the policy being pursued [by Iraq]. We warned the regional countries that Iraq is not interested in their security and interests. We also warned them that Iraq seeks to involve regional countries or, if possible, the entire world. In other words, it seeks to make this a regional war or, if possible, an international one because the only important goal for Iraq is how it can save itself. The interests and benefits of other countries are of no importance whatsoever.

Therefore, it was natural for Iraq to commence its present policy once the trend of normalizing relations between Iran and the Persian Gulf countries began after the era of tension and after the U.S. policy of sending warships to this area was proved useless. Actually, Iraq's recent propaganda and its policy are very informative for the leaders of the regional countries. Iraq does not even taken the most basic right of the regional countries into consideration, namely, their sovereignty. It ignores the fact that a country wants to have relations with its neighbors, and that a country, upon seeing its region plunged into crisis, trys to calm the region with the help of its neighbors. Iraq ignores even this right. Iraq's propaganda and attacks are also directed at Syria, a country trying to prevent the war from spreading and whose policy is similar to the Islamic Republic of Iran's and is for the benefit and interests of regional countries. Even Syria's policy is a target of Iraq's strong attacks. Actually, Iraq is trying to sacrifice everyone for the sake of preserving its regime, without considering regional security or the interests of the regional Arab countries. Therefore, the assessment that all of Iraq's efforts are aimed at making this plan fail is correct; this is what it wants. Therefore, the regional countries should discern what is important: their national and regional interests or pursuing Iraq's policies—policies that ignore the regional countries' interests and only consider Iraq's interests.

[Afshar] Mr Besharati, Mr Sarmadi referred to Iraq's attacks on Syria's policies. My question is on Syrian-Iraqi relations, about which we have been receiving contradictory reports recently. For example, Saddam Husayn stated in an interview with a Jordanian newspaper that the groundwork laid during the Arab summit in Amman in November for improving these relations has now been nearly destroyed and that there is now no hope for improving them. Meanwhile, we note that the Abu Dhabi press is reporting that Hafiz al-Asad and Saddam have stated their readiness to meet and normalize Syrian-Iraqi relations. What is your opinion of this apparent contradiction? How far can Syrian-Iraqi relations progress?

[Besharati] In our opinion, the Syrian Government is a revolutionary government and the last bulwark remaining from the Arab countries' struggles against the Zionist regime. On one side of the coin, we have the Iraqi regime which, since its creation in 1968—one year after the Arab-Israeli war in 1967—has not fired even one bullet at the Zionist regime, and has continuously created problems for progressive countries. Therefore, the possibility of a normalization of Syrian-Iraqi relations is very weak. The war was just a coincidence because, generally speaking, there is a fundamental difference between the Syrian Government and the Iraqi regime. Either Syria will have to deviate from its principles to come to terms with the Ba'thist Iraqi regime, or the Iraqi regime should become a revolutionary regime. In either case, the chances are almost nil. In view of this, we believe that the rumors alleging that the Iraqi regime is moving closer to Syria are completely baseless.

As for the meeting between Hafiz al-Asad and Saddam, this happened before and may happen in the future; it is possible. Hafiz al-Asad himself told us during our meeting: "We are Arabs. It is natural for us to sit down together and talk. However, he says what he has to say and we say what we have to say, and sitting down together does not mean that differences have ended." Well, by spreading these rumors and creating such atmospheres, certain countries believe that they can gain something, in one way or another, from some of the progressive countries that have good relations with us. However, the trend of events is moving against them.

[Afshar] Mr Sarmadi, as you know, the U.S. representative to the United Nations, Vernon Walters, will preside over the Security Council this month. In view of open U.S. hostility toward the Islamic Republic of Iran, what impact do you believe the U.S. presidency of the Security Council could have regarding Resolution 598?

[Sarmadi] The United States, as Iraq's main mentor, did its best to put pressure on Iran before the approval of Resolution 598, as well as after its approval, when it, along with the participation of a couple of its Western allies, put great pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran. With this resolution, the Americans want to do whatever they can to save the Iraqi regime. Even though some of the Security Council members and some international forums in general believe that this resolution should form a basis toward a just solution, the United States continues to pursue its own policy. I will not discuss why the United States is pursuing this policy at this time because this has been discussed previously. Now that the United States is presiding over the Security Council, it

will, undoubtedly, continue to pursue its past goals. However, there are some things that should be taken into account. The first is that U.S. pressure is automatically making the Security Council's other members and international forums conclude that apparently only U.S. decisions and views should be followed. However, this is bad as far as the prestige and credibility of the other members are concerned. Therefore, we foresee that the Soviet Union at least will not give in to Western policy—U.S. policy—which is one of inflicting pressure, because it knows that following this policy does not help the regional situation, the war, the Security Council, and the prestige of the Security Council members.

Despite all the foregoing, however, these pressures definitely do not have any special effect. In other words, the United States, its strategists, and its policymakers are stating that Iran is the region's most important country; that at least one path toward Iran should be kept open; that Iran cannot be lost; and that, naturally, when the Islamic Republic of Iran sees that the trend of the pressure is led by the United States, it will react strongly, which will actually threaten U.S. strategic policies in the region.

[Afshar] Mr Sarmadi, Mr Walters, the U.S. representative to the United Nations, stated at a news conference in Switzerland that the Iran-Iraq war will end by April, or about 2 months from now. An Italian ambassador had also stated that the Iran-Iraq war will end next month. In view of this, has there been any new development to account for such remarks or is this also a new plot?

[Sarmadi] Mr Walters' remarks on this subject do not carry much weight. He said he feels that this will happen [that the war will end by April]. Therefore, the remarks by the U.S. representative to the United Nations do not carry any weight to justify a discussion of them. In general, throughout the war we have witnessed that every time the topic of a massive mobilization of forces in Iran is brought up, the propaganda policy of Iraq's mentors is aimed at insuinuating that the end of the war is near. They do this because of their desire to keep the dispirited Iraqi soldiers at the fronts and to give them hope that the war will end if they resist a little bit longer. The issue of the war, its destiny and conclusion, all depend on the fulfillment of the just conditions put forth by the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is something that the entire world knows. It is a position that cannot change as a result of a view expressed by Mr Walters or by one ambassador or another.

[Afshar] Mr Besharati, I heard in the news that the UN secretary general has asked the Security Council to authorize him to hold a new round of talks with the Islamic Republic of Iran and with Iraq in the next couple of weeks. My question is: Will these talks take place, and if they do will the UN secretary general propound new points regarding Resolution 598?

[Besharati] In our opinion, Resolution 598 has positive points. It also has negative and ambiguous points that should be clarified through talks with the secretary general. Naturally, Resolution 598 is brief and regulations for its enforcement should be compiled. During Mr Perez de Cuellar's visit to Tehran and to the region, our high-ranking officials informed him of their views. Unfortunately, however, after his return to the United States and as a result of U.S. pressure, Mr Perez de Cuellar deviated from the positive views that we had heard in his remarks [here]. It is highly likely that the United States did not consider it advisable to continue its pressure on the Security Council and on the person of the secretary general because it realized that it had completely failed to achieve its aims. We have not retreated from our demands as far as the war is concerned. We have not deviated from our principles and will not do so. We will continue this course until the aggressor is punished—until the aggressor is recognized and condemned. If the UN secretary general pays a visit to the region for talks with us, then his remarks and views should reflect the fulfillment of our demands. Naturally, if the secretary general pursues this line, we are prepared to work with him.

[Afshar] Mr Sarmadi, early this week, the UN secretary general submitted a report to Security Council members on his talks with the representatives of Iran and Iraq. In this report, he stated that Iraq is preventing progress from being made with regard to peace talks stipulated in Resolution 598. On the other hand, now that Walters is presiding over the UN Security Council, Iraq has sent a letter to that body calling for it to implement immediately Resolution 598. There is a contradiction here. Are the secretary general's remarks true, or is Iraq actually endeavoring to bring about the implementation of Resolution 598? What is the reason for this contradiction?

[Sarmadi] The secretary general's plan as Mr Besharati also has pointed out, is actually aimed at implementing the articles of the resolution. Naturally, the articles of the resolution cannot be enforced in their current order. The secretary general is holding talks with the two sides to find practical grounds for its implementation. The secretary general's plan refers to a primary step which concerns the recognition of the aggressor, in which case we would be ready to cooperate with the secretary general and to continue the talks with him. The reports the secretary general has submitted to the Security Council specified that the Islamic Republic's views are based on the general spirit of the secretary general's plan which refers to the primary step—to identify the aggressor. Iraq's assessment of how the resolution should be implemented is incorrect and illogical. It says that the resolution's articles should be implemented in the same order as they appear. In fact, and as far as I know, the majority of Security Council members do not approve of Iraq's assessment and say that the secretary general has tendered a plan on the basis of this resolution, which should be the framework of future action. Therefore, when the secretary general's report to the Security Council refers

to a greater or more positive cooperation by us or to some of the obstacles created by Iraq, such a situation actually exists. Iraq is facing some international pressure, which has prompted it to send a letter to the Security Council affirming its readiness for the implementation of the resolution. However, what it means by implementing the resolution is very different from the secretary general's plan. Therefore, the contradiction that exists can actually be seen in Iraq's behavior.

[Afshar] Mr Sarmadi, in your remarks you referred to the first article of the UN Charter which concerns identifying the aggressor. The UN Charter also contains another article which states that once the aggressor is identified, the United Nations should take steps to thwart the aggression. As far as the Iran-Iraq war is concerned, after more than 7 years since it began, we have witnessed and continue to witness the lack of action by the United Nations—after 7 years—in accordance with its first duty which is to identify the aggressor. During this war, we have seen a United Nations that has not carried out its primary duty—to identify the aggressor—in the interests of the superpowers. As a result of this, do you believe that our presence in international forums such as the United Nations and the continuation of such political activities are tantamount to beating a dead horse?

[Sarmadi] As you pointed out, even though one of the most definite duties of the United Nations and the Security Council is to identify the aggressor at the very inception of a war and to try to thwart the aggression, this did not happen, unfortunately, precisely because of the political-international situation that prevailed in the world at that time. The Islamic revolution in Iran had upset this situation and no side favored the policy of "Neither East nor West." Therefore, we witnessed a weak action or, actually, inaction by organizations regarding this war. However, as far as ending our international activities because it [the United Nations] has not carried out one of its major duties, this would, in my opinion, mean leaving one of the arenas of struggle empty. The present arenas of struggle are the war front, the propaganda arena, and the arena of policy and international forums. We should be actively present in all of these arenas and do our best and not leave, because we have seen how both the political and propaganda levels have portrayed Iran as not wanting peace nor an end to the war. Actually, when we carry out these activities, we deprive countries of their excuses to continue their past policies. In other words, we disarm them in their efforts to propagandize against the Islamic Republic of Iran and to allege that Iran does not want peace and security.

[Afshar] Mr Sarmadi, please comment on the following: Our participation in these forums is aimed at convincing governments of our righteousness and, as our officials have stated in their remarks in various places, the officials of the majority of countries have confessed that the Islamic Republic is right and that Iraq is the aggressor. If we want to use our participation in these forums to convince nations of our righteousness, first, these countries already know and, second, we cannot use these forums' rostrums for propaganda purposes because, after all, these rostrums are in their [not further identified] hands. If they want they can weaken or they can strengthen these rostrums. As far as propaganda is concerned, everything is in their hands in such forums. In view of this, how do you assess the situation?

[Sarmadi] It is true that the heads of state or officials of countries admit in their private discussions that the Iraqi regime is the aggressor. However, I want to state that political relations on the international level are not very simple. National, regional, and international interests and economic problems all are factors that inhibit the countries that utter such things in private discussions or during bilateral talks from doing so on the international scene. Incidentally, the continuation of such activities is aimed at publicizing and crystallizing such confessions on this scene. In addition, the equations on the international scene are not such that problems can be solved only through talks and discussions. The progress of our fighter on the war fronts is a military victory. Political steps can alter this to make it a political victory. A propaganda step can change this to a propaganda victory in the world. These can have a certain impact on the world. You see how positions will change gradually. Former positions will be abandoned and pressures deflected or lifted. At any rate, while the activities of international forums certainly lack a bright record, our experience has proved that leaving this scene would not be a positive step. Postponing political activities in order to pay more attention to other activities—such as our military activities—have proved to be dangerous. However, operating all these weapons and turning all these wheels together will strengthen the system.

[Afshar] Mr Sarmadi, you stated that in their private meetings, the heads of state have confessed that Iraq is the aggressor. In view of the fact that most of the countries that have admitted this are members of the United Nations, why is that organization delaying in identifying the aggressor?

[Sarmadi] I have stated that regional and international considerations have not yet reached the stage where that admission will be made on the international level. Some do not even admit this during their private talks, if such an admission would be contrary to their policy. However, there are countries that, because of bilateral interests, have reached such a stage. As I noted in response to your previous question, international and regional interests are contingent on specific conditions—the scenes of war, the extent of victories, the extent of advances, relations with other countries, and the influence of the axes of power in the world. Some of these countries do not have a very independent policy and must, therefore, take certain positions in line with the policies of countries which control their policies to a certain extent. Therefore, it is the sum of all these factors that lead a country or the international arena to the point where certain

countries that made such an admission during their private talks at one time are now stating the same thing on the international scene as well.

[Afshar] Mr Besharati, at a time when the Americans are reducing their forces in the Persian Gulf, Soviet officials have stated in their interviews that they wish to leave Afghanistan and to pull out their troops. My question is: Are these two actions related to one another or not?

[Besharati] In answer to the previous questions, I stated that the motives that led to the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces from the Persian Gulf actually prove their impotence with regard to the steely determination of our Muslim nation. The Soviet forces in Afghanistan also are facing a similar situation. The God-seeking uprising of the Muslim people of Afghanistan has tightened the situation around the occupying Soviet forces, and removed any possibility of their continued military presence in the Islamic country of Afghanistan. Some 100,000 Soviet forces with extremely great military potential and equipped with ultra-modern arms were unable to force the Muslim Afghans to retreat. The same situation that the United States faced in the Persian Gulf was faced by the Soviets in Afghanistan. In order to prevent themselves from becoming more vulnerable and to avoid a further loss of prestige and credibility, they preferred to leave Afghanistan. We also believe it probable that the Soviet forces will leave Afghanistan. These two things are related to each other in this dimension.

[Afshar] My last question is on the possibility of a normalization and resumption of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia. It has been said that Iran has put forth three conditions for this: first, that Saudi Arabia pay blood money to Iran; second, that Saudi officials apologize officially to Iran; and, third, that Iran be allowed to participate in this year's hajj with approximately 150,000 pilgrims, and that the Iranian pilgrims be allowed to carry out demonstrations. Is this true? Have talks been held and, if so, has any progress been achieved?

[Besharati] During last year's hajj, the Saudi regime committed the worst of sins by attacking the pilgrims in the holy sanctity of the shrine and by massacring more than 400 of the best Muslims. Their second ugly act occurred after the sanctity and security of the holy shrine was breached, and after those outstanding and pious people were massacred, when they became the standard-bearers of movements in conferences of Arab countries and called upon these countries to sever their relations with Iran. Well, as they have committed such a great sin, they should now take the initiative to normalize relations with us. They should apologize and pay compensation for damages. However, as far as asking them for their permission to send our pilgrims to Saudi Arabia or for their permission to hold demonstrations are concerned, there is no such thing. The holy Koran states that the hajj is a compulsory act. Therefore, as it is meaningless for anyone to ask for permission in order to pray, it is meaningless to ask for the permission to carry out our compulsory duty. They do not have the right to create any obstacles for us. As far as the demonstrations are concerned, these are part of the hajj. The Koran says that God made the hajj and the Ka'bah as a means to render blows on arrogance. Of course, this is a free translation of the Koranic verse. In other words, a respectable and glorious hajj should be carried out.

In the past, and for years on end, the hajj pilgrimages—among the best opportunities to disseminate Islamic propaganda—lacked spirit. After the revolution, we gave meaning to the hajj and created a respectable hajj which is accepted by God. We will carry out demonstrations under any conditions. Actually, some hajj officials have told me that a large number of people have registered their names this year to participate in more serious demonstrations for "Unity in Medinah" and "Disavowal in Mecca." This is our policy. Their pressure will not force us to retreat. We will not ask for their permission to carry out demonstrations, as we do not ask for anyone's permission to defend our territorial integrity.

[Afshar] Thank you, Mr Besharati, for your presence in this week's political roundtable discussion. I also thank you, Mr Sarmadi.

Dear viewers, this ends this week's political roundtable discussion. At the end of this program I once again take the opportunity to congratulate you, the dear viewers, on the auspicious 10 Days of Dawn ceremonies. Wishing you, the dear viewers, success, I greet you together with the guests of this program, Messrs Besharati and Sarmadi. God bless you and good night.

AL-SAFIR Cites Kharazzi on Ending War

LD050904 Kuwait KUNA in English 0801 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Beirut, Feb 5 (KUNA)—A senior Iranian official was quoted here Friday as saying his country wishes to end the Iran-Iraq war through diplomatic means.

The leftist "Al-SAFIR" newspaper quoted member of the Iranian Supreme Defence Council Dr. Kamal Kharrazi as saying Iran, "wishes the war with Iraq would come to an end through diplomatic channels." He further expressed his country's interest in sorting out differences with neighbouring Arab Gulf countries through "diplomatic channels", as well.

"Gulf security depends to a large extent on good and proper relations between Iran and Gulf states", he said.

Iranian relations with Arab Gulf states have been strained following the outbreak of the Gulf war in 1980 with Tehran blaming the Arab Gulf countries of backing Iraq.

Some Arab Gulf states, on their part, accused Iran of trying to drag them into the war by attacking their oil tankers and installations.

Relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia deteriorated severely after Iranian pilgrims rioted in Mecca last year and Saudi forces intervened to end the riot, in which hundreds of civilians were either killed or wounded.

Kharrazi, who is chairman of the Iranian War Information Office, told the Lebanese paper his country's relations with the Soviet Union would improve soon adding a visit to Moscow by Iranian Parliament Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani "is still on but its date has not been fixed yet".

Yazdi-led Delegation Pays Visit to PRC

For PRC media coverage of the visit of Deputy Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Yazdi and an assembly delegation to the People's Republic of China, including talks with Chinese Foreign Minister and State Councillor Wu Xueqian and Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee Peng Zhen, see the Near East & South Asia section of the 5 February China DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Sudanese Envoy Summoned to Foreign Ministry

LD050830 Tehran IRNA in English 0827 GMT
5 Feb 88

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 5, IRNA—Sudan's Ambassador here Ibrahim Hamra was summoned to the Foreign Ministry Thursday and handed an official protest by the Islamic Republic against recent statements of that country's member of Presidential Council in Baghdad concerning the Iraqi-imposed war.

A Foreign Ministry official told Hamra that the remarks made in support of the aggressor regime of Baghdad can be regarded a violation of Sudan's neutrality in the war.

As a matter of fact, the Foreign Ministry official told Hamra, such statements by the Sudanese official means acquittal of the Iraqi regime of its horrible crime in assassinating Hojjat ol-Eslam Mahdi Hakim in the Sudanese capital "under circumstances that the world's public opinion is waiting for the results of the Sudan Government's investigations."

Hamra denied that the Sudanese member of Presidential Council had supported Iraqi in its war against Iran. He said according to what he had been told the report published by Iraqi News Agency had been distorted.

The ambassador said his country's neutral stance in the war has been officially reiterated time and again, adding that remarks by individuals must be regarded as their personal opinion.

Hamra also said investigations are continuing on martyr Hakim's assassination and that the world will be informed of the results as soon as they are completed.

Majlis Speaker Addresses Islamic Conference

LD041512 Tehran IRNA in English 1500 GMT
4 Feb 88

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 4, IRNA—Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, addressing the closing session of the sixth international Islamic thought conference here Wednesday night, elaborated on the concept of human rights in Islam and the world.

Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that as long as hegemonists and arrogant powers dominate international circles, any talk about human rights and human dignity seems meaningless.

At present, the speaker noted, the current problem of the world today is not the lack of any laws or regulations on human rights but unqualified people made responsible for enforcing these laws.

The world move for the human rights declaration started after two tragic world wars the fire of which was ignited by Europe, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said.

Although there are efforts to keep wars of Europe and America they (arrogant powers) in fact are warning in other parts of the world in a bid to win the arms race, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said. He made it clear the West's policy of imposing wars is aimed at hampering the unity and progress of the oppressed people.

The speaker, saying the worst rulers around the world are under influence of the main stage managers of the United Nations, noted that all dictators of the Third World depend either Western or Eastern powers.

The regime occupying Palestine perpetrate such crimes against Palestinian Muslims with the superpowers' assistance, he said, adding that if the U.S. did not prevent Muslims from helping their brethren in occupied Palestine Israel would never be able to resist.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that all crimes committed against Muslims in Afghanistan are supported by the Soviet Union. He also cited regimes ruling Hijaz, Iraq, Kuwait and Kampuchea as examples of oppressive governments.

He said the West and East, by supporting the Ba'thist Iraqi regime because of its enmity towards the Islamic revolution, are trampling upon all concepts of human rights and human dignity.

Concerning racial discrimination in the world, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that all racial discrimination centers around the globe are supported by both the U.S. and Britain.

The Majlis speaker said that all dictators depend on either the East or West, and there are no dictators in truly independent countries.

If either of the superpowers stop supporting the regimes ruling Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and Morocco one day, the people of these countries will easily get rid of their regimes and elect popular governments.

"How can the human rights declaration justify crimes committed by the Zionist regime in occupied Palestine or how can it be accepted?" questioned Hashemi-Rafsanjani. "If people in the West including the Americans accept their leaders' statements, they should either be arrogant or stupid."

"We, Muslims, have popular forces and a large population and therefore we should rise up without fear, for jihad (holy war) and martyrdom. If we consolidate power, all bullies will bow to our viewpoints just as NATO member countries did in the Persian Gulf," noted Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani also said that the Islamic Republic is willing to put all its resources at the disposal of nations fighting for freedom.

The 3-day sixth international Islamic thought conference opened at Esteqlal Hotel here Monday, the first day of the Ten Days of Dawn marking the 9th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran. A large number of prominent ulema, scholars and Islamists from Iran and other countries participated in the conference.

Soviet Economic Delegation Departs 4 Feb
LD041750 Tehran IRNA in English 1739 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 4, IRNA—A Soviet delegation which was here to hold preliminary talks on the forthcoming Iran-Soviet joint economic meet, left for Moscow today.

During their week-long stay the Soviet delegates discussed expansion of Tehran-Moscow economic relations with their Iranian counterparts and reached some understandings.

Economic ministers of the two countries are to meet in the joint economic session to be held in Moscow around mid-February.

Assassination Attempt on Iraqi Interior Minister
NC041821 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1740 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Ramadan Headquarters has reported that the Iraqi mujahidin recently attempted to assassinate Iraqi Interior Minister Samir al-Shaykhali in Baghdad. His brother was killed. [afada maqarru ramadan anna al-mujahidin al-'iraqiyin qamu mu'akhkharan bi-muhawalatin li-ghtiyali wazir al-dakhiliyati al-'iraqiyi samir al-shaykhali fi baghdad. asfarat al-muhawalatu 'an maqtali akhih.]

IRGC Spokesman Says Pressure on Iraq To Continue
LD031900 Tehran IRNA in English 1725 GMT 3 Feb 88

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 3, IRNA—Spokesman of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC), 'Ali Reza Afshar said the successive operations of Muslim combatants and despatch of forces to the war fronts will continue until the Iraqi Ba'thist regime is toppled.

This policy, he told the Persian daily KEYHAN in today's issue, necessitates the presence of enough forces on hand at the war front so that we would be able to deliver heavy blows on the Iraqi Ba'thist forces anytime and anywhere we chose.

Afshar noted that the constant state of alertness of the enemy forces has exhausted them in the southern and western fronts. The Ba'thist enemy expects Muslim combatants' to strike any moment, he added.

The enemy, he said, wrongly claims that Iranian forces will launch operations from such and such an axis.

Commanders Discuss Gendarmerie, Draft, Security
NC050855 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] In interviews with correspondents yesterday, Brigadier Sohrabi, commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Gendarmerie; Colonel Razmju, chief of military conscription; and Colonel Kianpur, chief of highway police, spoke in detail of the Gendarmerie's activities on and behind the fronts, issues pertaining to military conscription, and ways of safeguarding the country's highways. We now draw your attention to a report on these interviews:

According to our reporter on the scene, the Gendarmerie commander spoke first about the participation of the Gendarmerie's valiant members on the fronts of light versus darkness and in the campaign against the merchants of death. He said: Today, this organization is a strong arm for the velat-e faqih and the country's officials on the scene, and it will remain so until all vestiges of the enemies of Islam and the Koran, as well as of the merchants of death, have been eliminated. Its members will not hesitate to sacrifice their blood for this purpose.

The chief of military conscription referred to the dispatch of conscripts, which has doubled in the past decade, and said: With the plan now being implemented, the identity cards of those born in 1338 [1959] and later should be stamped with the seal of the Conscription Department. Any identity card not having this seal will be invalid, and the people possessing them will be considered as having no

identity cards. Therefore, it is better that those conscripts who have not yet reported to the public conscription centers do so as soon as possible. He also said: For those who are at the fronts for at least 3 months prior to the age of conscription, the 3 months will be considered as part of their term of military service. In the interview he added that, with regard to the exemption of one of the offspring of martyrs, POW's, and MIA's, if a person from such a family is disabled and the extent of the disability is confirmed by the Medical Council of the Martyrs' Foundation, a card stipulating a 6-month exemption will be issued on presentation of a certificate from the Martyrs' Foundation. This will facilitate matters. After an inquiry by the Martyrs' Foundation, a computerized card will be issued.

On exemption for medical reasons, he said: In every district the responsibility for setting up a medical council lies with the local governor. Those who have physical defects that are confirmed by this council upon examination can have a medical exemption.

Our reporter states further that at the conclusion of these interviews the chief of highway police said: Because the deprived areas of the country are in dire need of highway police posts, 24 checkpoints have already been opened and 24 more are being built and will soon be ready for use.

Panamanian Tanker Attacked Off Dubayy

LD051121 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] According to REUTER, shipping sources in the region said an oil tanker registered in Panama was this morning attacked by speedboats close to Dubayy. According to this report, it appears that the bridge of the "Tavistock" was damaged and its radio equipment disabled. The report adds: The oil tanker "Tavistock" is at the moment moving toward a Dubayy port, accompanied by tugboats.

Communique No 3,012 Details Recent Fighting

LD041559 Tehran IRNA in English 1552 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 4, IRNA—Iran's naval gunboats identified 32 cargo ships and oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz Wednesday but traced no suspicious case, according to a military communique here Thursday.

The 3012th Joint Staff Communique said that Iranian Air Force provided an effective cover to the Navy yesterday carrying out reconnaissance flights over the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman waters to reconnoiter positions of foreign vessels.

At the northern tip of the Persian Gulf, the Muslim combatant's heavy artillery fire Wednesday forced three Iraqi vessels to flee to their hideouts in the Khawr 'Abdallah Waterway separating Kuwait from the liberation Al-Faw peninsula, it added.

Iran's Muslim combatants opened heavy artillery and mortar fire on Iraqi positions and troop concentration sites throughout the battlefields, especially in Sumar, Khushk, Talaiyah and Faqqeh yesterday, inflicting substantial losses in men and equipment on the enemy.

In Helaleh, western sector yesterday, an Iraqi engineering vehicle was destroyed and all its crew killed by Iranian artillery fire.

Heavy artillery fire of Iran's Muslim forces checked movement of Iraqi vehicle columns and enemy engineering operations in Nahr 'Anbar, western sector, yesterday, inflicting several casualties and losses in enemy troops, concluded the communique.

Pakistan

11 Killed in Explosion on Afghan Border

BK050258 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 5 Feb 88

[Text] Reports from Islamabad say that 11 Afghan refugees were killed and 9 injured when a bus they were traveling in hit a land mine in Parachinar District on the Pakistan-Afghan border yesterday. Twenty people were aboard the bus which was smashed to pieces in the blast. Nine people were killed on the spot and two died on their way to the hospital.

UN's Cordovez Continues Talks With Officials

BK041545 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] Talks between Diego Cordovez, the UN secretary general's personal representative on Afghanistan, and senior officials from the Foreign Office continued in Islamabad today. These talks followed up the discussions held yesterday on outstanding issues, which included a timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the procedures for implementing the proposed agreement.

Sri Lanka

Iranian Training Vessels Dock in Colombo

LD041215 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 4 Feb 88

[Text] According to IRNA, two vessels from the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on an excursion in the Indian Ocean for naval training purposes, docked in Colombo last Tuesday. During the welcoming ceremonies held for these units, Hojjat ol-Eslam Morshedi delivered a speech to the students who had attended the training. He called them the envoys and messengers of the Islamic revolution of Iran.